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THE
NORTHERN CONFEDERACY

ACCORDING TO THE PLANS OF THE
"ESSEX JUNTO" 1796-1814

UC-NRLF



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A DISSERTATION
PRESENTED TO THE
FACULTY OF PRINCETON UNIVERSITY
IN CANDIDACY FOR THE DEGREE
OF DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

BY
CHARLES RAYMOND BROWN

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PREFACE

The "Essex Junto" when applied to a little band of politicians in Essex County, Massachusetts, by Governor Hancock in 1778, carried little significance outside of local politics. It very soon grew, however, to have a tremendous influence in national affairs.

It is the purpose of this work to follow the "Essex Junto," as an active political body, in their endeavors to control National legislation and, by skillful misrepresentation of the motives of the party in power, to arouse the New England people to the point of dissolving the Union and forming an independent Confederacy. I have attempted to show the true influence of this movement upon the national history of that period; and have, in some instances, found cause to give a new coloring to familiar historical events on account of the influence of the Junto.

That there has never been a monograph written upon this subject is due largely to the scarcity of available sources. In many instances the entire correspondence of men intimately connected with the Junto has been purposely or otherwise destroyed; and the fact that there was no regular organized movement has forced me to write this monograph almost entirely from the letters which have been preserved. There are no secondary sources of any merit upon the subject. The most valuable histories covering the period merely mention the "Essex Junto," and are of little value in treating the subject. With letters as my principal documents, and such fragmentary bits of evidence as I have been able to collect, it has been a difficult but an interesting subject.

Under the guidance and kind assistance of Dr. R. M. McElroy, this Thesis has been prepared to complete the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Princeton University.

C. R. B.

*Princeton University,
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2000

CHAPTER I

ORIGIN OF THE "ESSEX JUNTO"

Almost every historian who has mentioned the "Essex Junto" at all, has credited John Adams with the distinction of having first applied that name to a radical wing of the Federalist party which centered in Essex County, Massachusetts, and which afterwards figured so largely in shaping the destiny of the party: This is not true. The name originated a quarter of a century before Adams applied it and under entirely different circumstances. There was no such thing as party and party organization, as we understand those terms today, when "Essex Junto" was applied to a number of Essex County politicians. There were Whig views and Tory views but, before the Revolution, American political parties had not taken any definite form.

About the time of the Declaration of Independence, the formation of a constitution became a matter of much moment in the Colonies which had just become states. In Massachusetts, in June, 1776, it was proposed in the General Court that a constitution, or some form of government, be prepared and presented to the people.¹ It was thought better, however, to refer the matter somewhat more directly to the people; and the House of Representatives recommended that the towns empower their delegates, at the next election, to form a constitution. Many towns, perhaps most, complied with this request, and early in 1778 a constitution was agreed upon by the General Court, and presented to the people. It was rejected by them by a large vote.

There were several² reasons offered for rejecting the constitution but the strongest one was that the proposed constitution had carefully avoided a strong form of government and that the Executive was a mere cipher. The people were thus divided over the form of government which would be the most satisfactory to Massachusetts; one class desired a constitution

¹ Parsons' "Chief Justice Parsons," p. 45.

² *Ibid.*, p. 46.

which would place the governing power largely in the hands of the people; the other class believed that a strong centralized form of government would be most desirable and that the people should not be the real governing force. To the men of the latter class the proposed Constitution was wholly worthless and they succeeded in defeating it.³ The leaders of the opposition were from Essex County⁴ and believed in a strong central government. Here is the identical line upon which our first two national parties began their struggle.

A meeting of these men took place in Essex County, in April, 1778. By whom it was called, we do not know but it seems to have been attended by twenty-seven delegates.⁵ It originated in Newburyport and there began its work but later adjourned to Ipswich. At the latter place a pamphlet was prepared and ordered published which contained eighteen distinct articles stating the leading objections to the proposed Constitution.⁶ Its long title is: "The Result of the Convention of Delegates holden at Ipswich, in the County of Essex, who were deputed⁷ to take into consideration the Constitution and Form of Government proposed by the Convention of States of Massachusetts Bay." It is most familiar under its short title, "The Essex Result."

Upon that body of men who prepared this pamphlet and supported a strong central government, John Hancock fastened the title "Essex Junto" in 1778. This, therefore, was the first⁸ appearance of that name in American politics.

The following year in September, 1779, a convention⁹ was called, and met at Cambridge, to frame a constitution. A committee of four, Samuel Adams, John Pickering, Caleb Strong and William Cushing, was directed to draw up a Constitution

³ Parsons' "Chief Justice Parsons," p. 47.

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 47.

⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 49. Documents give number of delegates and say that Parsons called the Essex Convention.

⁶ *Ibid.*, appendix, p. 359, pamphlet printed in full.

⁷ "Deputed" would lead us to believe that they were officially appointed or elected; they were, however, evidently a self chosen body, representing twelve towns of the County of Essex.

⁸ Colonel Pickering quotes Chief Justice Parsons as saying that "Essex Junto" had been applied before the Revolution. There is no evidence that this was true, however.

⁹ J. S. Barry's "Hist. of Mass.," vol. 3, p. 176.

and Bill of Rights. John Adams was later added to the committee and was the real drafter of the document although he was not from Essex County. The Constitution,¹⁰ as presented by this committee, was adopted and it gave more power to the Executive.

These men of Essex County who later dominated the Federalist party were descendants of those who, in the dark days of 1629, had followed Endicott into the wilderness. They were strong, honest, and in many cases of an almost reckless courage. But their intellectual vigor and clear perception were in many instances combined with great mental narrowness and rigidity. When time brought new political forces and expansion of ideas the old Puritan stock could not bend to meet the changes. They resisted, therefore, as long as they could and submitted only when resistance was no longer possible.¹¹ In 1644 the Essex men had turned Wirthrop and Dudley out of office as Federal Commissioners, and replaced them with Hawthorne and Bradstreet, both of Essex County.¹² Palfrey, in his *History of New England*, says, "A local Caucus (not yet so called) arranged a combination to dictate the proceedings of the government; that those of Essex procured a court made up of Deputies of the several shires and propounded divers things without communicating them to the other shires." "Two hundred years ago," says Palfrey "Essex men were thought to be aspiring to rule the colony, as fifty years ago an 'Essex Junto' was cried out against for its alleged combination to rule the Commonwealth."¹³

Of such material was the "Essex Junto" composed which held political sway in Massachusetts and which had to be reckoned with, if not obeyed, for nearly a half century in national affairs.¹⁴

There have been many attempts to define "Essex Junto" but

¹⁰ F. N. Thorpe, "Constitution and Charters," House Documents, vol. 3, 59th Cong., 2nd Sess., p. 1888.

¹¹ H. C. Lodge's "Life of Cabot," p. 18.

¹² Palfrey's "Hist. of New England," vol. 2, p. 156.

¹³ *Ibid.*, p. 157.

¹⁴ The men who composed the Junto were Timothy Pickering, Caleb Strong, Jonathan Jackson, Triston Dalton, Theophilus Parsons, George Cabot, Fisher Ames, the Lowells, Benjamin Goodhue, and Stephen Higginson, all from Essex County. To these we will add others who were associated with the Junto.

no one has been very successful. Mr. S. E. Morrison says: "I take it that the Essex Junto, from 1800 to 1815 should be defined as the Massachusetts Federalist leaders who opposed John Adams in 1800, who condoned the *Chesapeake* outrage and who squinted at secession in 1814."¹⁸ It can best be defined after we have finished our investigation.

It should be remembered that the influence and activities of the "Essex Junto" were not to be long confined to a single county nor to a single state. The Junto was the dominating force in the Federalist party for many years; it had followers very early from the other New England states, and later from several states outside of New England. They were not always as ardent and dogmatic as the old members; nevertheless, they were of the same political faith and must be included under the title "Essex Junto" in our narrative. This monograph will not, therefore, have very great concern with the Junto in local affairs but rather with its influence upon national questions.

¹⁸ *Am. Hist. Rev.*, July 1912, p. 794.

CHAPTER II

OPPOSITION TO JOHN ADAMS' ADMINISTRATION AND THE BREAKING OF THE FEDERALIST PARTY

After the Constitution was adopted and Washington became President, the conflicting tendencies observed in the struggles over the adoption of the Constitution reappeared. The parties under Washington were known as the Federalist and the Republican. It had sometimes been supposed that these parties are identical with the Federalist and the Anti-Federalist of 1787-88. This is not true. To be a Federalist in 1787 and 1788 was to favor the adoption of the Constitution. To be a states' rights Anti-Federalist was to oppose it. But to be a Federalist in 1791 was to favor the adoption of Hamilton's financial measures and a broad construction of the Constitution.

The fundamental difference between the parties during the constitutional debate and its adoption was as to where the political power should center. Mr. Hamilton believed a strong central government with the power to govern placed in the hands of the aristocrats to be most satisfactory for any nation; he had neither sympathy for the states rights doctrine nor faith in the integrity of the masses of the people, and therefore, labored for a form of government bordering strongly on that of a Monarchy. Thus the term "Well born" was a contemptuous name given to the Federalists.

On the other hand were the states' rights Anti-Federalists who dreaded as the greatest of calamities the vesting of large power in a central authority. The Anti-Federalists believed that the central authority should draw its power from the states and from the people. We should notice, then, that these two parties of 1787-1788, represent merely two tendencies, the centrifugal and the centripetal.

Hamilton's financial policy and the broad construction of the Constitution in 1791, determined Jefferson to form a strong party to resist Hamilton's program. Having witnessed the outbreak of the French Revolution, Jefferson was eminently qualified to become the leader of such an opposition party, and

because of the predilection of its leaders for things French, the new party was called "Democratic-Republican." Thus the two parties, Federalist and Anti-Federalist, took their final form in the "Federalist" and the "Republican" parties.

The next few years brought vexing questions of foreign relations, which caused the two parties to drift further apart. "Citizen Genet" landed in 1793, the very day on which Washington issued his Neutrality Proclamation, and set to work rather after the fashion of a liberator than of a diplomat.¹ In pursuance of secret instructions, he not only presumed upon the force of the existing treaties, but attempted to draw the United States into the war, so as to make it her common cause. Money, men, and privateers from America, he especially reckoned upon. The party led by Jefferson was very enthusiastic over the French cause. It is said that, at a banquet given Genet, they all filed around the table sticking their knives into the head of a roasted pig in celebration of the beheading of Louis XVI. This being their attitude they exerted themselves to enlist French aid against England.

The Federalists, having less feeling for French Democracy, repudiated this bold and presumptuous attitude. Washington had already issued his Proclamation, and the feeling became intense. Insults were heaped upon the head of the venerable Washington by the followers of Jefferson, and the result was that the Republicans gave their sympathy to the French cause and the Federalists gave theirs to the English. Here, therefore, is the beginning of the "British Faction" and the "French Faction" and also the beginning of that party strife which lasted as long as the Federalist party. From this time the Essex Junto, leading the "British Faction," began its attacks upon the "Jacobins" or Jeffersonians.

In 1793 Great Britain issued two of her Orders in Council,² by virtue of which all vessels loaded with bread stuff, bound for any place occupied by the French armies, were considered good prizes. This was almost an unbearable hardship to American shipping. Hamilton, therefore, advised a special mission to Great Britain, and communicated his plan to that portion of the Junto then in the Senate. The Eastern Senators, Cabot, Ellsworth, Strong and King, then held a conference, endorsed

¹ Schouler's "Hist. of U. S.," vol. 2, p. 265.

² Perkins' "Late War," pp. 12-14.

the mission and appointed Ellsworth to confer with Washington.³ He was instructed to state that Hamilton was the person from whom, in every point of view, a successful issue to this effort was most to be expected.⁴ Ames, although more hostile to the English than his eastern brothers, wrote: "Who but Hamilton would perfectly satisfy all our wishes? He is *ipsi agmen*."⁵ This was probably true from a Junto point of view, but not from that of the Republicans.

Washington avowed his preference for Hamilton, but intimated doubts arising from the prejudices which had been excited against him.⁶ The same idea was repeated to Goodhue, "You know," said Washington, "whom I wish,—but for the clamor they have raised against him."⁷ Randolph, Secretary of State, urged that such an appointment would be unwise,⁸ and Monroe, even ventured on a letter against the choice of Hamilton.⁹ John Jay was nominated, as a compromise, and negotiated a treaty¹⁰ which failed to satisfy both parties, although it was ratified by the Senate and signed by the President. It is not necessary for our purpose to discuss this treaty, which failed to adjust many of the points which the United States held as grievances.¹¹

The Junto had failed to obtain the appointment for Hamilton but in Congress it had gained adherents and succeeded in ratifying the treaty,¹² although it seems strange that Eastern Senators should have been willing to make Great Britain concessions when their commerce was the chief sufferer. Ratification took place behind closed doors and, when the contents of the treaty were made known, the country was inflamed as by fire. The constituents of this group of Senators held meetings in opposition as did the whole country. Hamilton and the

³ Hamilton's "Hist. of the Republic of the U. S.," vol. 5, p. 532.

⁴ Hamilton's "Republic," vol. 5, p. 532.

⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 532.

⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 533. Washington referred to those in the House of Representatives who were hostile to the Anglomani party.

⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 533. Jefferson, Randolph and Monroe, were responsible for the appointment of Jay.

⁸ Washington's Writings, vol. 10, appendix, p. 558.

⁹ *Ibid.*, appendix, p. 558. Monroe's letter to President Washington.

¹⁰ Jay Treaty. Am. State papers, vol. 1, p. 520.

¹¹ Hamilton's Works, vol. 7, p. 723. Hamilton said, "The Treaty upon the whole was satisfactory." Refer to text of Jay's Treaty.

¹² Schoulers' "Hist. of U. S.," vol. 2, p. 309.

Junto were left alone. The Federalist party lost a good deal of local strength, which the Republicans gained; and Great Britain went on with her tyranny.

In the year 1796, in dread of the possibility of the election of Jefferson, and the establishment of a Southern and pro-French domination over the United States, an appeal was made to the people of Connecticut, preparing them for and pointing to a dissolution of the Union. "The Northern States," it urged, "can subsist as a Nation, as a Republic without any connection with the Southern."¹³ There was a series of articles published in the *Hartford Courant*, over the signature of Pelham, urging the dissolution of the Union.¹⁴ In letters of Oliver Wolcott, Lieutenant Governor of Connecticut, to his son, then Secretary of the Treasury, the idea was repeatedly advanced. "If," says Wolcott, November 21, 1796, "the French arms continue to preponderate, and a governing influence of this Nation shall continue in the southern and western countries, I am confident, and indeed hope, that a separation will soon take place."¹⁵ "Such an event," he says, November 28, 1796, "will be unhappy for us; but much less so, than to be under the government of a French agent."¹⁶ "I sincerely declare," he added a few days later, "that I wish the Northern States would separate from the Southern, the moment that event (the election of Jefferson) shall take place."¹⁷

This plan of disunion, thus rife in Connecticut in 1796, may not improbably be regarded as the germ of that which appeared at Washington, in 1803-04, at Boston in 1808-09, and which showed itself, for the last time, during the War of 1812, being disclosed, in the Hartford Convention of 1814. Whether or not this was the sowing of the seed which sprang up at the above mentioned places we have no evidence. It is true, however, that Connecticut was always represented in the movements of the Junto which had its base in Massachusetts. That is sufficient for our purpose.

After the election of John Adams, the United States was forced to face her former ally, France, in a still more serious

¹³ Randall's "Jefferson," vol. 3, pp. 634-5.

¹⁴ Randall's "Jefferson," vol. 3, pp. 634-5.

¹⁵ Quoted in Plumer's "Life of Plumer," p. 283. Almost all of the Wolcott papers have been destroyed.

¹⁶ Plumer's "Life of Plumer," p. 283.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 283.

difficulty, known as the X. Y. Z. affair. In this controversy the Federalist party received a blow from which it never recovered. France, disgusted and jealous of our recent treaty relations with England, set upon our commerce in retaliation for what she termed injustice, and it became necessary to open treaty negotiations with her. Adams, therefore, sent a commission consisting of Marshall, Gerry, and Pinckney, to negotiate with France upon the situation. . . . This was an unfortunate appointment and it gave the members of the Junto an excellent opportunity to ridicule the new President who was as much a Republican as a Federalist. None of these men, except perhaps Gerry, were in sympathy with the French Revolution and, of course, their appointment was not agreeable to the French.

Hamilton said, "To be useful, it is important that a man agreeable to the French should go. Either Mr. Jefferson or Mr. Madison should be on the committee, but neither should go alone."¹⁸ In this Hamilton was right and the appointments, being somewhat contrary to the advice and wishes of the leading Federalists, further antagonized them, and led finally to open opposition to the Administration. This is a familiar bit of history and we need only state that the commission was not received, but was approached by certain unofficial gentlemen, named in the official despatches merely by the letters X, Y, and Z. The object of these unofficial visits was purely to get money from the United States. Their demands, therefore, were disregarded, and yielding nothing. Pinckney and Marshall were soon ordered to leave, while Gerry was invited to remain. That he did so was not to his credit.

When the X. Y. Z. despatches were published, the Junto, especially those members of it who were in the Cabinet, was quick to take advantage of the feeling produced against France and began to work up a war spirit in New England.¹⁹ Wolcott, Secretary of the Treasury, wrote Cabot asking him to use his influence with the people of Massachusetts against France.²⁰ To his request Cabot replied: "I hope from my very soul that the President will enjoy the immortality which is due the man who dares do right when the whole world does wrong. I

¹⁸ Hamilton's Works, vol. 6, p. 214.

¹⁹ Political Writings in Lodge's "Cabot," pp. 581-600. This will give a partial estimate of the agitation which took place in New England.

²⁰ Lodge's "Cabot," p. 117.

readily accept the apostleship and will use your discourse as if it were my own. My zeal has already produced a letter of two sheets which will be transcribed as a circular to a half dozen friends. I will quote no authorities to infidels and the faithful won't need them."²¹ Mr. Cabot would have been dangerously near the truth if he had said: "when the whole Junto does wrong." The war spirit in Congress was due largely to the energy of these men, and in 1798, preparations were begun for military defense. Washington was made Commander in Chief and chose his Major Generals as follows: Hamilton first Major General, Pinckney second, and Knox third.²²

President Adams disapproved of Washington's ranking of the Major Generals and attempted to place Knox above Hamilton. By this action the President brought the whole Junto forward with remonstrances,²³ and, but for the timely intervention of Washington, the party might have been hopelessly split at this juncture. As it was the existing breach between Adams and his party was only broadened. There was really no good reason for the action of President Adams in this matter. Washington had agreed to assume the duties of Commander-in-Chief only on condition that he be allowed to choose his staff, and extreme aversion to Hamilton seems to have been the only basis for Adams' conduct.

The first schism in the Cabinet took place at Trenton, New Jersey, early in 1799.²⁴ The trouble arose from the President's desire to send a second mission to France to attempt further negotiations. The particular expressions which passed on this occasion are not preserved; but, from Mr. Hamilton's Public Letter²⁵ we are informed of the principal causes. Such an effort was considered by the Cabinet to be inconsistent with the honor and dignity of the Nation. Pickering, Wolcott and McHenry, remonstrated with Adams but with little success. Judge

²¹ *Ibid.*, p. 120.

²² *Ibid.*, p. 177.

²³ Pickering wrote Cabot confidentially saying: "The object of this letter is to engage you in this matter in such a way as you and one or two confidential friends (say Higginson and Ames) shall deem most eligible to prevail on the President to acquiesce in the first arrangement."

²⁴ John Woods, "Administration of J. Adams," p. 223.

²⁵ A public letter in which he denounces President and which we will examine later.

ing from a letter²⁶ from Pickering to Rufus King, it is clear that the greater part of their strength was thrown into opposition on this measure. He says: "The second mission to France was deprecated by all enlightened Federalists,—especially in New England. I know personally that your friends Cabot, Ames, Higginson, Ellsworth, and Quincy objected to it."²⁷

This opposition determined Adams to make the nominations without further Cabinet consultation. He had no alternative if he wished to send the mission. So on the 26th of February, 1799, he nominated Oliver Ellsworth of Connecticut, Patrick Henry of Virginia, and Wm. Vans Murry of Maryland, Envoys Extraordinary, and drew up his own instructions. Henry declined, and Wm. R. Davie of North Carolina, was substituted.

This friction in the Cabinet put Mr. Adams in a very difficult position. He believed further negotiation to be the safest policy for the country; but the Junto desired a war with France.²⁸ The policy adopted was undoubtedly the wisest but it resulted in the common ruin of President and party, by giving the Junto a broad foundation upon which to attack him. The fact that a portion of the party held erroneous views, and that the President, in opposition to these views, carried through a peace policy, is not a satisfactory explanation of the consequent defeat of the Federalists. "The causes of defeat in this instance lay deeper, and were inherent not only in the party, but also in the character of the prominent men."²⁹ There were too many leaders in the party; all of them were unbending and all dogmatic to a greater or less degree. This policy of Adams, the wisdom of which cannot be doubted, was held as an absurdity by most of the dominant Federalists. It was unfortunate also that two³⁰ of the most ardent supporters of the war policy held the highest offices in the Administration.

We cannot doubt that Hamilton and all of the Junto saw

²⁶ Pickering Mss., November 7, 1799.

²⁷ Combine these with Hamilton and the Cabinet Junto members and we have the leaders of the opposition.

²⁸ Adams Works, vol. 9, p. 270.

²⁹ Lodge's "Cabot," p. 193.

³⁰ Pickering and McHenry, Secretaries of State and of War. Wolcott was Secretary of the Treasury. Pickering was a man as eminently self-centered as Adams and perhaps had a greater imagination, for he truly believed that he was the whole Cabinet. He not only aspired to lead his party but also the President.

clearly that peace and strong neutrality were for the best interests of this country, but they were trying to restrain "Jacobism" and hold the reins of the Government, at the same time; which policy gradually undermined their strength. "We must all agree," says Pickering to Higginson, "in the one great object of securing Federalists for the two first magistrates of the Union; that all predilections which might thwart this view must be laid aside."⁸¹

However great may have been Adams' mistakes his position was now almost intolerable for his highest ministers were working against his policies. He was somewhat relieved, therefore, when McHenry asked permission to resign his office as Secretary of War.⁸² His resignation was accepted by the President who immediately requested Pickering to resign his office as Secretary of State. The Secretary refused to resign and was dismissed by the President. Pickering immediately wrote Hamilton of his dismissal and added: "I have been contemplating the importance of a bold and frank exposure of Adams; perhaps I may have it in my power to furnish some facts."⁸³

Adams' greatest mistake in connection with these men was his retaining them in office so long. It was the duty of a President to replace officers who directly oppose his leadership, not because the President may always be sound in his opinions and the offending officers unsound, but because no President can hope to accomplish anything when there is a direct and bitter opposition among his advisers. A "Kitchen Cabinet" working in harmony is to be preferred to one of intellectual giants pulling at either end of the string, as subsequent history has disclosed. Adams received a round of biting abuse from the other Junto members who added this to their growing stock of grievances. Sedgwick wrote Hamilton in this connection saying: "Every tormenting passion rankles in the bosom of that weak and frantic old man, but I have good reasons to believe that Pickering and McHenry have been sacrificed as a peace offering. But no decided measures should be taken until I see you."⁸⁴ The cause of the sacrifice of these men upon an altar of peace,

⁸¹ Pickering Mss., December 23, 1799.

⁸² Hamilton's Works, vol. 6, p. 442.—McHenry to Hamilton: "I requested the President's permission to resign the office of Secretary of War May 6, 1800."

⁸³ Hamilton's Works, vol. 6, p. 443.

⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 442.

according to Junto estimates, was the desire of Adams for Southern favor in the approaching election. There may have been an element of truth in this, because the Junto were rapidly ruining his chances at the North. The sacrifice caused much excitement in their ranks and they used it as evidence against him later.³⁵

Adams seems never to have suspected any disloyalty on the part of Oliver Wolcott, Secretary of the Treasury. He was not nearly so boisterous and disturbing a man as Pickering, yet in a very guarded way he furnished more information than any other man for Hamilton's denunciation of the President. He wrote Hamilton, July 7, 1800, that he would readily furnish any statements desired; that the affairs of the government would not only be ruined but the Federalist party disgraced if it permitted Adams to be re-elected.³⁶ He admitted in the same letter that many prominent Federalists were being discredited, and suggests that an apology must be offered to the public. We shall see later how this apology was presented.

The lack of system in Adams' Administration can, in a large measure, be traced to these Cabinet officers. They were members of the Essex Junto and were constantly acting under an influence from without and not in accord with their chief. It should be noticed that nearly, if not all, of their complaints had been addressed to Hamilton. In short, Hamilton dictated to and led the Junto always contrary to Adams' policies. They wrote him regarding every move by the President and sought instructions as to their procedure.

It was upon this body of men, some of whom were in Congress, some in the Cabinet, and others outside, that President Adams fixed the name "Essex Junto,"³⁷ and because of their eagerness for a war with France he called them the "British faction, aided by Alexander Hamilton and his satellites."³⁸

³⁵ Lodge's "Cabot"; Adams' Works, vol. 9; Schouler's "Am. Hist.," vol. 2. Here we have a party of intriguers tampering with a disease without offering a method of cure.

Dr. N. Ames says in his Diary, vol. 10, p. 27: "Such reiterated insolence of the British Junto cannot long be borne. Beasts would resist such gibes and goads as the Administration are receiving from the Junto."

³⁶ Hamilton's Works, vol. 6, p. 447.

³⁷ Harper's Encyclopedia, vol. 3, p. 246; Schouler, vol. 2, p. 481.

³⁸ Adams' Works, vol. 9, p. 281; Lodge's "Cabot," p. 20. Pickering says that Adams attributed his (3 vote) majority over Jefferson in

The Republicans rejoiced at the charge of "British faction," but Hamilton determined to denounce Adams publicly; a plan which had long been in his mind, and as he had succeeded in getting the necessary information he believed the time ripe for the blow.³⁹ Hamilton had evidently been much concerned as to the most satisfactory way in which to present the denunciation. He wrote Wolcott: "If I denounce him publicly members of the Cabinet will be understood to be the sources of my information. I could predicate it on the fact that I am abused by the friends of Mr. Adams, who ascribe my opposition to pique and disappointment; and could give it the shape of a defense of myself."⁴⁰ It is very clear that Hamilton's conscience was far from being easy, for, if the secret intrigues of the Junto were laid open, he foresaw the sad end of its career. He realized that a bold move must be made at once, or the day would be lost for the Junto and himself. So he again addressed Wolcott as follows: "I wait with impatience for the facts which you promised me."⁴¹ It is plain that, unless we give our reasons in some form or other, Mr. Adams' personal friends, seconded by the Jacobins, will completely run us down in public opinion. Your name, in company with mine, that of T. Pickering, etc., is in full circulation, as one of the British faction of which Mr. Adams has talked so much."⁴² Wolcott was evidently slightly dilatory in complying with Hamilton's wishes for a few days later he received another letter from Hamilton, saying: "You may depend upon it, a very serious impression has been made on the public mind, by the partisans of Mr. Adams, to our disadvantage. That the facts hitherto known have very partially impaired the confidence of the Federalists in Mr. Adams, who for want of information,⁴³ were disposed to regard his opponents as factious men. If this cannot be counteracted, our characters are the sacrifice."⁴⁴

1797, to the Essex Junto and named especially Cabot, Parsons and Higginson.

³⁹ Hamilton's Works, vol. 6, p. 450.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 450.

⁴¹ These are the facts which Wolcott had promised to furnish relative to the confidential Cabinet communications.

⁴² Hamilton's Works, vol. 6, p. 449.

⁴³ All the information, so far as the Junto was concerned, had been confined to secret correspondence, from one to another.

⁴⁴ Gibbs, "Administration of Washington and Adams," vol. 2, p. 422.

Hamilton finally got the desired information from the Cabinet officials⁴⁵ and just before the election in 1800 published his famous pamphlet, entitled: "The Public Conduct and Character of John Adams, Esq., President of the United States."⁴⁶ This paper was supposed to show why President Adams was unfit for re-election and why certain members of the party were advocating the election of General Pinckney. It degenerated, however, into a most spiteful attack upon the character and administration of Adams. It attempted to cast all public disfavor upon the President and, at the same time, to place a veil over the foiled intrigues of the Junto.

Mr. Adams in commenting on Hamilton's bold assertions, contained in the pamphlet, wondered how he (Hamilton) got such minute information. He asked the question, "Had he a spy in the Cabinet, who transmitted from day to day the confidential communications between the President and heads of the departments?"⁴⁷ Hamilton has told us very clearly whence came his information. In a letter to Wolcott he says: "Some of the most delicate of the facts stated, I hold from the three Ministers, you yourself particularly, and I do not think myself at liberty to take the step without your consent. I never mean to bring proof, but to stand upon the credit of my own veracity."⁴⁸

We need not give much time to a discussion of this publication, for Hamilton has made it clear that it would be a defense of the secret conduct of the Essex Junto.⁴⁹ He proceeded to unfold the faults of the President chiefly by dwelling on such peculiarities as temper, egotism, vanity and jealousy. He showed neither corruption, insanity, nor ruinous misbehavior on the part of Adams, as some of his friends had expected him to do⁵⁰; nor that the President was wrong and the would-be directors were right in the French affair. In fact, Hamilton had undertaken more than even he could do, and a very weak and disgusting document was the result. It was held by many Federalists to be highly impolitic⁵¹; disclosing as it did a deter-

⁴⁵ Pickering, Wolcott, and McHenry.

⁴⁶ Hamilton's Works, vol. 7, p. 687; the pamphlet is given in full.

⁴⁷ Adams Works, vol. 9, p. 303.

⁴⁸ Gibbs, "Washington and Adams," vol. 2, p. 421.

⁴⁹ Gibbs, "Washington and Adams," vol. 2, p. 422.

⁵⁰ Schouler's "Am. Hist.," vol. 2, p. 489.

⁵¹ Sullivan's "Public Letters," p. 103.

mined aversion from the continuance of Mr. Adams' official power; it was undoubtedly the strongest instrument that contributed to the defeat of Adams at the ensuing election. This publication, whatever may be thought of its motive, time and manner, certainly broke the last thread which held together the Federalist party. The break would have come in time and nothing could have prevented it, because all of the strongest men in the party were leaders, all egotistic and all narrow. Therefore, Hamilton, aided by the able leaders from New England, whom Adams saw fit to classify as a "Junto" wrecked vengeance upon the party which they had labored to create.

The truth must be told. There were a few of Hamilton's friends, the Junto, who had expected Adams to make an unqualified recommendation of a declaration of war against France in his message of 1798. When the President arrived at Philadelphia, he said: "I sent for the heads of departments to consult, in the evening, upon the points to be inserted in the message to Congress, which was soon to meet. The conduct of these gentlemen upon this subject was as I wished it to be, no one giving a decided opinion either for or against a declaration of war. That there was disappointment, however, in Hamilton and his friends, is apparent enough from this consideration, that, when it was definitely known that a declaration of war was not to be recommended in the President's message, a secret caucus was called of Federal members of Congress, to see if they could not get a vote for a declaration of war, without any recommendation from the President, as they had voted the Alien and Sedition law and the Army. All that I shall say is, that Mr. Hamilton and friends could not carry the vote."⁵² President Adams says he then asked, "What action should be taken in the case we determined against a declaration of war? Instead of silence and reserve which was given my first question, it was urged that France be allowed to make the first overture. I believe that some of the heads of departments were confident, in their own minds, that France would not send a minister here."⁵³

Mr. Stoddert, in a private letter, declares the belief that the result of this Caucus was decisive in fixing the policy of the country. He says: "A majority of the Caucus, composed en-

⁵² Adams' Works, vol. 9, p. 304.

⁵³ *Ibid.*, p. 304-06.

tirely of Federal members of the two Houses, would not agree to a declaration of war; and the result of the meeting showed too plainly to be mistaken by the President that it was his duty to avail himself of the first fair opportunity that presented itself for seeking reconciliation, without debasement."⁵⁴

Adams, having changed his position somewhat, carefully left an opening for negotiation, should France express a desire to treat with us. In this message of December 8, 1798, he says: "It is peace that we have uniformly and preservingly cultivated, and harmony between us and France may be restored at her option. But to send another Minister there without more determinate assurances that he would be received, would be an act of humiliation to which the United States ought not submit. It must, therefore, be left with France, and if she desires accommodation we will respect the sacred right of embassy."⁵⁵

Therefore, the question, "why did the Junto so ardently desire war with France," naturally presents itself. In one of Mr. Adams' papers printed in the *Boston Patriot* he makes the following statement: "They could not, or would not, distinguish between Jacobinism and neutrality. Every thing with them was Jacobinism, except a war with France and an alliance with Great Britain. They all panted for a war between the United States and France as sincerely, though not as ardently, as Alexander Hamilton." Mr. Liston⁵⁶ repeatedly suggested, according to Adams⁵⁷ that he was ready to discuss that question. "And there were not wanting insinuations and instigations to me," says Adams, "to confer with Mr. Liston on the subject of an alliance."⁵⁸

Pickering denied that he ever wished to bring about an alliance with Great Britain, but he says, "In 1798, I, in company with others, deemed a rupture with France inevitable and it was certainly natural and proper to ally ourselves with Great Britain."⁵⁹ That is, they desired a rupture with France as the only means of justifying the alliance with Great Britain; but

⁵⁴ Stoddert to Adams, in Lodge's "Life of Cabot," p. 200; also noted by C. F. Adams, "Life of J. Adams," vol. 9, p. 305.

⁵⁵ Adams' Works, vol. 9, p. 128.

⁵⁶ English Minister to the United States.

⁵⁷ Adams' Works, vol. 9, p. 286.

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 286.

⁵⁹ Pickering, Mss., December 14, 1800.

we must not forget the fact that Mr. Adams is defending himself and is known to have been egotistic, self-reliant, and unbending. We must remember also that if there is one characteristic which always marked the lives of John Adams and his son, it was honesty of purpose. By whom, therefore, was shown the greater amount of patriotism, Hamilton and the Junto, or the President who stilled their war cry?"⁸⁰ I would not even suggest that Adams was a faultless man. I would not have any one believe that he did not make his errors, many of which were due to flights of temper, etc., but the fact cannot be denied that Adams' judgment was sound and for the best interests of the Nation. He had the peace and welfare of this country at heart, while the opposition were intriguing to prevent further negotiations and to hurl us into a war with France. For what? Largely because Alexander Hamilton could not see beyond the command of a large army. The Junto seemed to think that anything was honest and honorable so long as it kept the Jacobins out of office.

Adams, therefore, succeeded in putting down the Junto plots at this period, and thus prevented a war with France; but the price was his defeat and also that of the Federalist party. I think that it would not be unjust to Hamilton and to the Junto to say that they broke up their own party because they could not control and dictate the whole of its policy. Adams seems never to have been as confident of Hamilton's genius and honesty as was Washington. Washington brought the best out of the fiery West Indian; Adams stirred him to do his worst.

During the last few years of Adams' administration Hamilton had the advantage of being the critic, while Adams bore the responsibility. The final collapse found Hamilton and Adams each in command of a fragment of the party, neither having sufficient strength to be effective.

⁸⁰ I say Hamilton and the Junto because he was their faithful guide and spokesman for a number of years.

CHAPTER III

PLANS FOR SECESSION 1803-1804

For the first and last time in his administration John Adams found himself popular after the publication of the X. Y. Z. despatches. The moderate Republicans in the House were swept away by the current, and thus there was built up a compact Federalist majority in both houses. It then proceeded deliberately to make sure of the destruction of the party. The newspapers had now reached an extraordinary degree of violence; attacks upon the Federalists, and particularly upon Adams, were numerous, and keenly felt. Many of the journalists were foreigners, Englishmen and Frenchmen. To the excited minds of the Federalist leaders, these men seemed leagued with France in an attempt to destroy the liberties of the country; to get rid of the most violent of these writers and at the same time to punish American-born editors who too freely criticised the administration, seemed to them essential. To meet both necessities they passed the Alien, Sedition, and Naturalization laws, the first empowering the President to banish from the country, without giving a reason for or a trial to, any alien whom he considered a dangerous or suspicious person; the second made it a crime to publish any false and malicious writings against the Government, Congress, or the President, with the intent to defame them, to bring them into contempt, or to excite the hatred of the people against them; the third raised the time of residence for naturalization from five to fourteen years. These laws were intended to silence the Republican journalists and to make permanent the Federalist power but their effect was just the opposite of what was expected and they practically assured the success of the Republicans at the next election.

In 1801, after it was known that there would be a Republican President, with a majority in both houses of Congress, the Federalists resolved to bolster up their power in the third department of government. A Judiciary Act was therefore

passed, creating new courts, new judges, and new salaried officials. All the resulting appointments were made by Adams and are known as "midnight judges" because of their twelfth hour appointment.

But the assurances that a Republican had been elected did not end the difficulties for the Jeffersonians. The Constitution had neither specified which candidate should be voted for as the presidential preference nor which should receive the second honors. The Constitution said: "The person having the greatest number of votes shall be President, if such number be a majority of the whole number of electors appointed, and the person receiving the second highest number of votes shall be Vice-President." When returns were in Mr. Jefferson and Mr. Burr were found to have an equal number of votes. The responsibility of electing a President was then thrown upon the House of Representatives.

It is thought by some that a lack of party organization was responsible for Jefferson not getting a larger electoral vote than Burr.¹ But it is also thought by others that Mr. Burr employed secret agents and sent them into some of the states when the Legislatures were appointing the electors to use their influence in his favor.² Mr. Davis, in his *Life of Burr*, says that Timothy Green of New York was sent to South Carolina, and Abraham Bishop of New Haven to Pennsylvania. Both of these men flatly deny any such connection with Burr. Burr also denies the charge.³ Despite these denials there is much evidence to prove that Burr was, in truth, intriguing with disappointed Federalists to obtain the seat intended for Jefferson.⁴ Hamilton wrote Bayard before the election saying, "Burr is intriguing with all his might in New Jersey, Rhode Island, and Vermont with a possibility of success."⁵

The Junto came out openly and declared themselves in favor of Mr. Burr when the vote was known to be equal. Almost all the federal newspapers⁶ advocated the election of Burr.

¹ Powell's "Nullification and Secession," pp. 116-117; Von Holst, vol. 1, p. 168.

² M. L. Davis' "Memoirs of A. Burr," vol. 2, pp. 91-98; printed letters.

³ *Ibid.*

⁴ John Wood's "Views of Burr's Political Conduct."

⁵ Hamilton's "Republic," vol. 7, p. 402.

⁶ Papers for 1801, Harvard Library.

Different reasons, however, were assigned for this preference. The *Connecticut Courant* was in favor of him, because he was of New England extraction; the *New York Gazette* intimated that Burr would give up his bad principles; and the *Boston Centinel* preferred him because it thought his character somewhat like that of Bonaparte, but possessed of none of the cold hearted qualities of the Gallic Consul! Such is the sentiment to be gathered from the leading newspapers on the subject.

When the balloting began in the House, the Federalists, having a majority, attempted to elect Burr over Jefferson, or prevent an election altogether.⁷ In the last event the President of the Senate would have been made acting President, but in case there had been no President of the Senate, the Speaker of the House would have acted President, pro-tempore, until a new election could be held.⁸

Burr promised to commit himself to the Junto in the event of success through their instrumentality.⁹ The electors of New Jersey were federal. Dr. Samuel Smith, President of the College of New Jersey, was an elector. It was boldly charged that Dr. Smith was secretly to have voted for Mr. Burr and thus make him President of the United States.¹⁰

Hamilton, who had led the Junto through the Administration of John Adams, broke with them when they proposed to put Burr in the President's chair or to prevent an election altogether. It is evident, however, that he was willing to provoke a quarrel between Jefferson and Burr, for he wrote Wolcott, December 16, 1800: "It may be well enough to throw out a lure for him (Burr), in order to tempt him to start for the plate, and then lay the foundation of dissention between the two chiefs. You may communicate this letter to Marshall¹¹ and Sedgwick."¹² Perhaps he thought this would cause a rupture in the Republican party and finally reinstate the Federalists; or, perhaps, he hoped that Burr would challenge Jefferson and

⁷ Von Holst, vol. 1, p. 186; Powell's "Nullification and Secession," p. 116; Hamilton's "Republic," vol. 7, pp. 424-468.

⁸ Act of March 1, 1792, W. W. Willoughby "Constitution," vol. 2, p. 1141.

⁹ Davis' "Memoirs of A. Burr," vol. 2, p. 89.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, Dr. Smith denied the charge.

¹¹ Chief Justice.

¹² Hamilton's Works, vol. 6, p. 486.

both be killed. It is difficult to say just what Hamilton had in mind at this time.

Hamilton received letter after letter from members of the Junto giving reasons why Burr should be preferred to Jefferson.¹³ Sedgwick wrote that he believed Burr would commit himself to Federalist policy if elevated to the Presidency by them.¹⁴ Ames, less confident and with an eye directed to the future, wrote: "I doubt whether Burr will be Federal, if chosen by the Federalists. He would reconcile himself to his old friends as soon as possible. Will Jefferson forget or forgive your efforts to bring in Burr, if they should fail of success? Will resentment precipitate him to adopt violent counsels, to attack the funds, to restrict British commerce, to hug France closer, etc.?"¹⁵

To these and many similar letters, Mr. Hamilton replied denouncing the idea and advising that Federalists support Mr. Jefferson. Hamilton and Burr were bitter political rivals in New York and the idea of the latter being elevated to the Presidency provoked many harsh accusations from Hamilton. In regard to their preventing an election he said: "This, if it could succeed, would be, for obvious reasons, a most dangerous and unbecoming policy. But it is well it should be understood that it cannot succeed."¹⁶ He wrote Wolcott some days later saying: "The idea that Burr is to be elevated to the Presidency by the Federalists forces causes me pain. Will any reasonable calculation on the part of the Federalists uphold the policy of assuming so great a responsibility in the support of so unpromising a character? Adieu to the Federal Troy, if they introduce this Grecian horse into their citadel."¹⁷ "If there is one man in this world," Hamilton wrote G. Morris, "I ought to hate, it is Jefferson."¹⁸ Yet when he was fully convinced that the Junto had entered into such a plot, his pen produced letter after letter urging his followers to exert their influence for Mr. Jef-

¹³ Hamilton's "Republic," vol. 7, pp. 434-465; the correspondence in this regard was very extensive. The above will furnish an idea of what actually transpired.

¹⁴ Hamilton's Works, vol. 6, p. 511.

¹⁵ Seth Ames, "Fisher Ames," vol. 1, p. 291.

¹⁶ Hamilton's Works, vol. 6, p. 508.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 487-489.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 499.

person.¹⁹ He, therefore, stood out alone opposed to the intrigues of those whom he had led against John Adams until Jefferson was elected.

Burr's refusal to denounce his Republican friends and to commit himself definitely to the Federal yoke was the one great reason why he was not elected President.²⁰ He was perfectly willing, however, to accept anything offered to him.²¹ But on this, as on all other subjects, he refused to commit himself to the Junto policy. There was no man more thoroughly despised by the Federalists than Aaron Burr. Why then did they wish to throw him upon the country as its chief? "Whatever they may imagine," says Hamilton, "the desire of mortifying the adverse party must be the chief spring of the disposition to prefer Burr."²²

No one saw more plainly than Alexander Hamilton that the American people, especially the followers of Thomas Jefferson, would not be content with the election of Mr. Burr. The Junto were certainly not ignorant of the fact that Jefferson was the people's choice and that they were sowing seeds for a revolution; yet Bayard says, "We had several caucuses in the House. All acknowledged that nothing but desperate measures remained, which several were disposed to adopt, and but few willing openly to disapprove."²³ If Burr had been the people's choice, Jefferson would doubtless have acquiesced without a murmur, but Burr being a Junto choice, Jefferson's attitude can only be a matter of conjecture. But there was every reason to doubt the sanction of the people, in such an event, and Hamilton clearly understood it. The campaign brought out the fact that Mr. Jefferson was the best loved and most soundly hated man in America.

Not until the thirty-sixth ballot, did Jefferson get a majority. He was then declared elected. Again the country was rescued from an ugly Junto plot. This time, we must thank Mr. Hamilton for deserting the Junto and for his unusual patriotism,

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, see letter to Governor Jay, N. Y., in which Hamilton asks the Legislature be assembled for the purpose of changing in Jefferson's favor, the number of electors. Jenkinson's "Life of Burr," p. 61.

²⁰ Hamilton's Works, vol. 6, p. 487; Von Holst, vol. I, p. 173.

²¹ *Ibid.*, p. 522. Bayard to Hamilton; "The means existed for electing Burr, but this required his co-operation."

²² *Ibid.*, p. 489.

²³ Hamilton's Works, vol. 6, p. 523.

and Mr. Burr for maintaining an ambiguous position. The people undoubtedly voted for and intended that Mr. Jefferson should be President. If Mr. Burr had been elected we may still wonder what would have been his policies. Unfortunately we can think of nothing but civil strife and discord.

We have seen how Hamilton had led the Junto against the Administration of John Adams; how he halted and displayed symptoms of patriotism when it was desired to place Burr in the President's chair; and now we are to see him discarded because he would not lead to the desired extremes.

It is a significant fact that from this time on the Junto began to seek another leader, for Hamilton had proved himself not as radical as themselves when it came to a point of action. The party was in a hopeless condition. Jefferson's election had not caused the internal revolution which they had expected. The New England leaders had become desperate. Fisher Ames in a letter to Gore sums up the situation thus: "The Federalists are already stigmatized as an oligarchy, as a British faction. Hamilton is obnoxious and persecuted by popular clamors, in which Federalists, to their shame, join."²⁴

The most important question which Jefferson had to face during his first administration was the right of navigating the Mississippi river. Spain had on the 1st of October, 1800, ceded the whole of Louisiana to France. Our depositing station and the mouth of the Mississippi were temporarily closed. The situation demanded an immediate solution. The real statesmanship of Jefferson flashed forth at once showing every one his attitude on such questions, even though it was with France. He wrote Ambassador Livingston in Paris saying: "This session completely reverses all the political relations of the United States and will form a new epoch in our political course. There is one spot on the globe, the possessor of which is our natural and habitual enemy. It is New Orleans, through which the produce of three-eighths of our territory must pass. . . . France, placing herself in the door, assumes to us the attitude of defiance."²⁵ Negotiations were immediately begun and on the 30th of April, 1803, the treaty ceding the whole of Louisiana to the United States for the sum of \$15,000,000 was concluded at Paris.

²⁴ Ames, "Life of Ames," vol. I, p. 289.

²⁵ Jefferson's Works, vol. 4, pp. 431-432.

Hamilton again manifested true statesmanship by declaring with Jefferson: "I have always held the unity of our empire, and the best interests of our nation that we shall annex to the United States all the territory east of the Mississippi, New Orleans included."²⁶ But not so the Junto! This position placed a greater barrier between Hamilton and the Junto. Nor did the majority of the Federalist party share this broad view, but ridiculed the President for making the purchase. For what reason? Because New England believed that this expansion of territory gave the Southern states a preponderance for all time."²⁷ It was the old battle cry, balance of power. One section must not be allowed more representation than the other. This extension would give the South the advantage.

It was the purchase of Louisiana, therefore, which gave impetus to a plan which had been creeping upon New England, aided and stimulated by the Essex Junto. They agreed that the inevitable consequences of the annexation of this vast territory would be to diminish the relative weight and influence of the Northern section; that it would aggravate the evils of slave representation and endanger the Union by the enfeebling extension of its line of defense against foreign-invasions. But the alternative to annexation was,—Louisiana and the mouth of the Mississippi in the possession of France under Napoleon Bonaparte.

The acquisition of Louisiana, although the immediate cause for this project of disunion, was not its only, nor even its most operative cause. The election of Mr. Jefferson to the Presidency had meant to those swayed by sectional feelings the triumph of the South over the North,—of the slave representation over the free. On party grounds it was the victory of professed democracy over Federalism. Louisiana was accepted as the battle ground, however, and from that point the war was waged.

Mr. Griswold, Representative from Connecticut, said in the House of Representatives, October, 1803: "The vast and unmanageable extent which the accession of Louisiana will give the United States; the consequent dispersion of our population, and the destruction of that balance of power which is so important to maintain between the Eastern and Western States,

²⁶ Hamilton's Works, vol. 6, p. 552.

²⁷ Von Holst, vol. 1, p. 185.

threatens, at no distant day, the subversion of our Union.”²⁸ Plumer of New Hampshire, declared in the Senate: “Admit this Western World into the Union and you destroy, at once the weight and importance of the Eastern States, and compel them to establish a separate and independent empire.”²⁹

The Junto stoutly maintained, not only on the floor of Congress, but also among their constituents, that the balance of power between the North and South was disturbed.³⁰ They became active in stirring up the Federal press of New England to clamor for separation, and by all the means in their power encouraged the leaders of their faction in Congress to lay plans for secession.³¹ Massachusetts was the leading commonwealth in raising the cry of disunion.³² The Massachusetts Federalists asked for an amendment³³ to the Constitution which sets forth, at length, the principle that the Union of States could not exist on terms of inequality; that the representation of slaves was a concession of the East to the South, and that the representation was injurious and hurtful from the first.³⁴ The advocates of the proposed amendment stoutly maintained that Massachusetts was in danger; that her sovereignty and her independence were swiftly and surely being taken away; that the power of the South over the North was due to slaves and that a crisis was at hand. Thus the sons of Massachusetts argued that separation was the only means of preserving their independence.³⁵

In view of subsequent history, it is interesting to reflect that the earliest talk of disunion came from those who upheld and profited by the institution of slavery, but from men who

²⁸ Annals of Congress, No. 13, Eighth Cong., 1st Sess., p. 465.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, Wm. Plumer, at first, was an ardent supporter of the Northern Confederacy plan, but later changed his position and furnished much valuable information about the Junto.

³⁰ Ann. Rep't of the Am. Hist. Asso., 1897, p. 152; eleven years later this same question was debated in the Hartford Convention, and an amendment was prepared to so amend the Constitution that New England might hold her power in the National Gov.

³¹ *Ibid.*, p. 152.

³² *Ibid.*, p. 152.

³³ *Ibid.*, p. 153; McMaster, vol. 3, p. 45; known as the “Ely Amendment,” passed by Mass. Legislature and presented to Congress by T. Pickering but there perished.

³⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 153.

³⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 153.

were descendants of the founder of civil liberty in New England.

The disunion project was under secret discussion in the eastern quarter of the Union, fermented by those most hostile to the new order of things. It had its origin, as we have seen, in Washington where the New England coterie in Congress comprised ambitious and disappointed men.⁸⁶

The *Connecticut Courant* comments upon the situation as follows: "Although our National Government must fall a sacrifice to the folly of Democracy, and to the fraud and violence of Jacobinism, yet if our state governments can be preserved, tranquility may yet be lengthened out. These observations are made in full view of that most deplorable event, the fall of the National Government. But, I hope that our state governments may yet be preserved from the claws of Jacobinism."⁸⁷ The *Eastern Argus*, on the other hand, hostile to the Junto movement, declares that the time has arrived when the cloven foot of Federalism has made its appearance without a covering. "The plots of these leaders of aristocracy," it says, "have been showing their hideous deformity, at different periods, ever since the establishment of our Government. But that which discloses their ultimate design to overthrow our happy Government and establish a monarchy, appears in the declaration of Uriah Tracy, Senator from Connecticut."⁸⁸ The *Argus* goes on to quote the letter from Mr. Tracy to General Skinner "and others" in which he declared that, "Republican forms of government will never answer"—that "our Constitution is good for nothing,"—that, "the President and Senators must be hereditary,"—that, "it must be here as in Great Britain."

Mr. Jefferson said: "The 'Essex Junto' alone desire separation. The majority of the Federalists do not aim at separation. Monarchy and separation is the policy of the Essex Federalists; Anglomany alone, that of those who call themselves Federalists. The last are as good Republicans as the brethren whom they oppose and differ only in their devotion to England and hatred of France imbibed from their leaders."⁸⁹ No one has given a better summary of the shattered Federalist desires than this.

⁸⁶ Schouler's "Am. Hist.," vol. 3, p. 68.

⁸⁷ *The Conn. Courant*, March 8, 1812.

⁸⁸ *The Eastern Argus*, February 10, 1804.

⁸⁹ Jefferson's Works, vol. 9, p. 182.

The Junto had been working for some time without any central head or rallying point. They had no leader since Hamilton forsook them, and this had proved to be a great impediment and, perhaps, a greater blessing to the country. There was no organization working toward a desired end.⁴⁰ They were simply trying to get as accurate an idea as possible of the sentiment of the people upon whom they must depend. They maintained the utmost secrecy⁴¹ and went about on their tiptoe lest the awful monster leading the opposing forces be acquainted with their plans. They were sensible of the fact, however, that there must be some central point around which they could cluster, and someone as reckless as themselves to lead. I think we can say that Mr. Pickering, from this time, assumes the position of leader and does more than any other man to effect their schemes.

In a letter to Mr. Cabot, Pickering gives us a pretty clear idea what the Junto had in mind and what they hoped to accomplish. To quote him: "The last refuge of Federalism is New England, and immediate exertion, perhaps, its only hope. It must begin in Massachusetts. The proposition would be welcomed in Connecticut; and we doubt of New Hampshire? But New York must be associated; and how is her concurrence to be obtained? *She must be made the center of the confederacy.*"⁴² Vermont and New Jersey would follow, of course, and Rhode Island of necessity. Who can be consulted, who will take the lead? The Legislatures of Massachusetts and Connecticut meet in May, and of New Hampshire in June.

"The subject has engaged the contemplation of many. The gentlemen of Connecticut have seriously meditated on it. We⁴³ suppose the British provinces in Canada and Nova Scotia, at no remote period, perhaps, without delay, and with the assent of Great Britain, may become members of the Northern Confederacy. Certainly that Government can only feel disgust at our present rulers. She will be pleased to see them crestfallen. She will not regret the proposed division of the Empire. A liberal treaty of Amity and Commerce will form a bond of

⁴⁰ Lodge's "Cabot," p. 19.

⁴¹ Henry Adams' "New England Federalism," p. 164.

⁴² Italics my own.

⁴³ This refers to the Junto members in Congress as mentioned above, from time to time. They discussed it a great deal as we will see later.

union between Great Britain and the Northern Confederacy highly useful to both.”⁴⁴

Mr. J. Q. Adams, a member of Congress says that during the Spring Session of 1804, the author of the written plan was named to him by Mr. Tracy.⁴⁵ And that he was a distinguished citizen of Connecticut. “I was told,” says Adams, “it originated there; had been communicated to individuals at Boston, at New York, and at Washington.”⁴⁶ The plan, according to Mr. Adams,⁴⁷ had three alternatives of boundary. “1. If possible, the boundary was to extend to the Potomac, 2. to the Susquehanna, 3. to the Hudson. That is, the Northern Confederacy was to extend, if it should be found practicable, so as to include Maryland. This was the maximum. The Hudson, that is, New England and a part of New York, was the minimum. The Susquehanna, or Pennsylvania, was the middle term.” The plan, if possible, was evidently destroyed.

In the life of Mr. Plumer⁴⁸ by his son, various extracts are given from his contemporary journals and correspondence, exhibiting special and definite particulars of the plan of disunion, and of interview in reference to it with its projectors and followers. “I recollect and am certain,” says Plumer, “that on returning early one evening from dining with Aaron Burr, Mr. Hillhouse, after saying to me that New England had no influence in the Government added that, ‘The Eastern States must and will dissolve the Union, and form a separate government, and the sooner the better. But I think the first man who mentioned the subject to me was Samuel Hunt, a Representative from New Hampshire. He conversed often and long upon the subject. He was very eager for the Northern Confederacy and thought it could be effected peaceably and entered into a detailed plan for effecting it. I often talked with Robert Griswold. He was, perhaps, the most eager of all whom I talked with, and was practically of the same opinion as Mr. Hunt. Next to Griswold, Uriah Tracy conversed most

⁴⁴ Pickering Mss., January 19, 1804; Adams, “New England Federalism,” p. 338; appendix. This indicates that they expected the proposed Confederacy to be recognized by Great Britain. A treaty of Amity and Commerce would, otherwise, be impossible.

⁴⁵ Undoubtedly Robert Griswold if such a plan was written.

⁴⁶ Randall’s “Jefferson,” vol. 3, p. 636, appendix.

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 636.

⁴⁸ Plumer was yet in Congress and in sympathy with the Junta.

freely and fully regarding the plan. It was he who informed me that Hamilton had consented to attend a meeting of select Federalists at Boston, in the autumn of 1804. Mr. Pickering told me of the plan while we were walking around the northerly and easterly lines of the city."⁴⁹

Under date of November 23, 1806, Plumer mentions in his journal, that in the winter of 1804, Pickering, Hillhouse, and himself dined with Aaron Burr; that Hillhouse, "unequivocally declared that it was his opinion that the United States would soon form two distinct governments"; that "Mr. Burr conversed very freely on the subject"; "and the impression made on his (Plumer's) mind was, that Burr not only thought a separation would not only take place but that it was necessary." Yet," he says, "on returning to my lodgings and critically analyzing his words, there was nothing in them that committed him in any way."⁵⁰ These quotations leave us no longer in doubt as to where the conspiracy began and that there were a great many plans being made. These plans, we regret to say, were hatched in the National Congress and by some of its ablest members.

The Junto seems not to have overlooked the fact that considerable expense would be attached to their plan and Robert Griswold, according to Mr. Pickering,⁵¹ made a careful examination of the finances. He found that the States above mentioned, to be embraced by the Northern Confederacy, were then paying as much, or more, of the public revenues as would discharge their share of the public debt due those states and abroad, leaving out the millions given for Louisiana. In the same letter he assumes that our mutual wants would render a friendly and commercial intercourse inevitable; that the Southern States would require naval protection of the Northern Union, and that the products of the former would be important to the navigation and commerce of the latter.⁵²

Many of the Junto believed that separation could be brought about peaceably. Indeed, they had a perfect right to think so for the right of secession had not been very seriously questioned at this time. The Constitution was in its infancy and no

⁴⁹ Plumer's "Life of Plumer," p. 298; Adams' "Federalism," p. 106; Randall's "Jefferson," vol. 3, appendix.

⁵⁰ Randall's "Jefferson," vol. 3, p. 637, appendix.

⁵¹ Letter to Cabot. Adams' "Federalism," p. 338.

⁵² *Ibid.*, p. 338.

one seems to have had a very clear idea just what it could be made to cover. Secession, therefore, was not held to be an unpardonable sin. It was spoken of frequently on the floors of Congress and no one was censured for such utterances.

But in case forceful means should be necessary they looked to General Hamilton as military leader.⁵³ We can scarcely believe that Hamilton had consented to this, for he disapproved of the plan. It is very likely, however, that the Junto expected it of him and he may have given his consent. It is interesting to reflect whether or not, in view of his expressed sentiments on the subject of separation, he would have listened to a call to lead forces of a Northern Confederacy against the South and West, if such a crisis had arisen. Would his patriotism have wavered when weighed in the balance against his military ambitions? Eager as he was for military glory, the prospects would not have been sufficiently alluring to satisfy his ambitious desires. He wished to lead a great National army and nothing less would have sufficed.

Therefore, with their plans fairly complete, the Junto began again, without any open organization, to apprise their innocent constituents of these plans and to ascertain, as far as possible, just what percentage could be depended on to follow them into the proposed haven of rest. Their mode of enlightenment was a secret⁵⁴ correspondence. These letters are full of the vilest denunciations of Jefferson and his policies. Any one who may desire to read them will be convinced that our present-day politicians have tongues and pens unusually discrete when compared to this minority wing of that once dominant party.

The Federal editors, who under the late administration were devoted to the principles of passive obedience and who enforced the necessity of unqualified submission to the Constituted authorities, were soon imbued with Juntoism. These same editors, therefore, in 1803 were in the true spirit of disorganization, vilifying the President and administration and further encouraging the people to resist the Constituted authorities.⁵⁵

⁵³ Adams' "Federalism," p. 147; Plumer's "Plumer," p. 303; Adams to Plumer: "Much of my information was collected from Mr. Tracy."

⁵⁴ Lodge's "Cabot"; Hamilton's "Republic," vol. 3; Adams' "Federalism," for much of the correspondence.

⁵⁵ *American Mercury*, April 9, 1803; see also, *The Pittsfield Sun*; *The Statesman*, *The Republican Spy*, *The Boston Gazette*, *The Democrat*, *The Essex Register*, and many other papers might be cited filled with the bitterest possible articles.

One of their bitterest thrusts was leveled against Jefferson for unseating their "midnight judges." They claimed that he was surely destroying the Constitution with an eye single to his own glory and to that of the common folk.⁵⁶ This proved to be always an effective argument, even though called from the past. The Louisiana purchase, of course, was proclaimed to be a destruction of that balance of power, established and ordained, once and forever, by the framers of the Constitution. The new Constitutional Amendment, they purported to believe was solely a party amendment designed to keep Republican in office to the complete exclusion of Federalists. But perhaps the weightiest argument of all was what they termed the "Virginia influence." This influence, they claimed, supported every suggestion of Jefferson's and could only be broken up by a dissolution of the Union.⁵⁷

The *Vermont Centinel*, November 21, 1804, has the following to say regarding the popularity of the recent amendment: "The recent excellent amendment to the Constitution proves that Mr. Jefferson's Administration has been the most popular that the United States has ever experienced. Fourteen of the seventeen free and independent states adopted the Amendment, some unanimously, too." No possible objection could justly have been found to an amendment simply providing that it be specified which candidate was to be President and which Vice-President. The other points need no comment.

But, the lack of a regular leader had not been the only obstacle in the way of success for the Junto's plans. There were some of the members who agreed that New England was unprepared and that there must be a more definite and widespread complaint before she could act. George Cabot said: "It is not practicable without the intervention of some cause which would be very generally felt and distinctly understood as chargeable to the misconduct of our Southern masters; such for example, as a war with Great Britain."⁵⁸ manifestly provoked by our rulers."⁵⁹

⁵⁶ Adams' "Federalism," pp. 331-336.

⁵⁷ Schouler, vol. 3, pp. 68-71; Von Holst, vol. 1, p. 187; Hamilton's "Republic," vol. 7, p. 772. See particularly Pickering's letter to Lyman; Adams' "Federalism," p. 343.

⁵⁸ Does this mean that in the event of war New England would cast strength with Great Britain? We will see much more of this in the next chapter.

⁵⁹ Lodge's "Cabot," p. 341; Adams' "Federalism," p. 346.

Tapping Reeve⁶⁰ commented sarcastically upon their "unpreparedness" as pointed out by Cabot and suggested that, if the members in Congress would come out with glowing comments upon the ruinous tendencies of the measures of the Administration before the sitting of the Legislatures, that would bring about all the "preparedness" necessary.⁶¹ In the same letter Reeve suggested a very ingenious plan by which a foundation might be laid for separation. "I do not know," he says, "in what manner this separation is to be accomplished unless the Amendment ⁶² is adopted by three-fourths of the legislatures, and rejected by Massachusetts, New Hampshire, and Connecticut upon the last ground taken by Delaware.⁶³ In such case, I can see a foundation laid." Presumably he meant by this, that if several of the New England States would reject it as not having been passed by a two-thirds vote of Congress, the people would immediately fall in line and clamor for separation. The problem confronting the Junto was how to get the people prepared and willing to follow them. However firmly convinced that their plan was good, they found many a "doubting Thomas" and this work progressed slowly.

It has been shown that the Junto believed it to be absolutely necessary that New York be made the central point of the Confederacy. The question, therefore, was how to get control of it. They must capture New York and find some one to lead in the final dash. Pickering, although never wanting in argument, was not the person, they felt, to place at the head of their Confederacy. At length they saw a chance to elect Aaron Burr Governor of New York, and, in this way, establish the man they most despised as leader and ruler of the Northern Union.

The silent but persistent determination of Jefferson's friends to force Burr into retirement produced much bitterness in New York, where the Vice-President had a nest of young followers gaping for office. There was no effort to re-nominate Burr

⁶⁰ A lawyer and judge in Connecticut; a brother-in-law of Burr, and well acquainted with the Junto schemes.

⁶¹ Adams' "Federalism," p. 342; see note added by Pickering.

⁶² Twelfth Amendment of the Constitution.

⁶³ That the amendment had not been passed by two-thirds of the entire number composing the respective Houses.

for the Vice-Presidency. Governor Clinton, the new nominee for the office, declined to be re-nominated as New York's Governor. It became necessary, therefore, to choose a candidate for the Governorship. The regular Republican nomination fell upon Chief Justice Lewis.⁶⁴ The opposing faction of the same party nominated Aaron Burr, with the confident expectation that the Federalists would cast their votes for him.

It was the work of the Burrrites in New York that opened the way for the Junto. Before Congress adjourned, therefore, the Eastern separatists conferred with Burr regarding the situation in New York.⁶⁵ They believed that Mr. Burr ought to commit himself definitely to other policies if they should consent to throw all of their weight into the contest and elect him. The Junto knew that they could not, even in conjunction with the New York Federalists, elect a Governor because the last election had exhibited so large a Republican majority.⁶⁶ But they saw a chance, in conjunction with the Burrrites, to elect Mr. Burr, thereby scoring two points: (1) The capture of New York for the center of their Union; (2) the election of a man whose only virtue, in their opinion, was that he was unscrupulous enough to do their bidding.

Mr. Griswold made an engagement to call on Burr in New York after the close of Congress. Griswold wrote Wolcott saying: "Burr has expressed a wish to see me, and to converse, but his situation⁶⁷ in this place does not admit of it; and he begged me to call on him in New York. Indeed, I do not see how he can avoid a free and full explanation with Federal men."⁶⁸ According to Hamilton's Republic⁶⁹ the interview took place between Griswold and Burr at the home of the latter in New York, on the 4th of April. And with the same cautious non-committal he had shown during the Presidential election, Burr stated that he must go on as a democrat to obtain the Government; that, if he succeeded, he would administer it in

⁶⁴ Mr. Lansing was first nominated but declined, and Judge Lewis was nominated.

⁶⁵ Schouler, vol. 3, p. 70.

⁶⁶ Adams' "Federalism," p. 354; Griswold to Wolcott. Hammond's "Political Hist. of N. Y.," vol. 1, p. 202.

⁶⁷ He refers to his position as Vice-President.

⁶⁸ Adams' "Federalism," p. 354; note the expression "Federal men" not party.

⁶⁹ Hamilton's "Republic," vol. 7, p. 786.

a manner that would be satisfactory to the Federalists. In respect to the affairs of the Union Burr said: "The Northern States must be governed by Virginia, or govern Virginia, and there is no middle course."

In the letter, referred to above, Griswold adds: "He (Burr) speaks in the most bitter terms of the Virginia faction, and of the necessity of a Union at the Northward to resist it; and it may be presumed that the support given to him by Federal men would tend to reconcile the feeling of those Democrats who are becoming dissatisfied with their Southern masters." Thus they were forced to accept Burr in a "Just as I am" attitude. It was too great a chance, however, to be recklessly flung away. So the Junto aid and the influence were tendered Burr with hope pitted against fate.

The question then arises, by what great process of juggling patriotism and statesmanship, could a few New England Federalists control an election in New York? By what great stretch of moral principles could they relieve their consciences after thrusting such a character as Aaron Burr upon New York as Governor? We will again quote Robert Griswold for our answer. "Although the people of New England," he says, "have not on ordinary occasions,⁷⁰ a right to give an opinion in regard to New York, yet upon this occasion we are almost as deeply interested as the people of that state can be. If any other project can be fallen upon which will produce the effect desired of creating a union of Northern States, I should certainly prefer it. . . . The election of Colonel Burr is the only hope which, at this time presents itself of rallying in defense of the Northern States."⁷¹

Mr. Pickering in his attempt to influence Rufus King⁷² wrote from Washington, March 4, 1804: "The Federalists here, in general, anxiously desire the election of Mr. Burr to the Chair of New York; for they despair of a present ascendancy of the Federal party. Mr. Burr alone, we think, can break your Democratic phalanx; and we anticipate much good from his success.

⁷⁰ This was certainly an extraordinary one. If Burr had been placed over a Northern Confederacy, the sectional questions, would probably have been settled early in our history, and under different circumstances.

⁷¹ Adams' "Federalism," p. 354; Hamilton's "Republic," vol. 7, p. 782.

⁷² King and Hamilton were never persuaded to adopt a secession policy.

Were New York detached (as under his administration it would be) from the Virginia influence, the Union would be benefited. Jefferson would be forced to observe some caution and forbearance in his measures."⁷³ Pickering evidently meant that the Northern Union would be much more likely to succeed.

There is one figure that we must not lose sight of who was able, at any moment, to stay or forward the plot of the Junto. Alexander Hamilton leading a quiet life at his home in New York was watching the movement of the New England Federalists with an eagle's eye, ready to swoop down and devour their dearest plans if they did not accord with his ideas. Hamilton was the man whose yea or nay, at this critical moment, could decide the destiny of the Union. There is not the slightest doubt that his and only his leadership, could rally the New York people to action. Once he had defeated Aaron Burr and the Junto; would he do it again?

About the time the nominations were being made in New York a few leading Federalists held an informal conference at Albany to consider the expediency of either nominating a Federalist candidate, or if this should not prove expedient, of supporting either of their opponents' candidates.⁷⁴ Hamilton knowing the intention of the Junto, and viewing it as a question far beyond the politics of New York, was present.⁷⁵ To his mind it was a question of the preservation or of the dissolution of the Union. He read, therefore, a paper of very great importance before the conference, entitled: "Reasons why it is desirable that Mr. Lansing,⁷⁶ rather than Colonel Burr, should succeed."⁷⁷ The point which Mr. Hamilton made in this paper was that Mr. Burr had always pursued the track of Democratic politics. This, he had done either from principle or from calculation. If the former he would not at that time change his plan when the Federalists were prostrate. If the latter, he certainly would not relinquish the ladder of his ambition, and espouse the cause of a weaker party. He went further, how-

⁷³ Pickering Mss., March 4, 1804.

⁷⁴ Hamilton's "Republic," vol. 7, p. 770; Von Holst, vol. 1, p. 198.

⁷⁵ *Ibid.*

⁷⁶ Lansing had not yet resigned the nomination.

⁷⁷ Hamilton's "Republic," vol. 7, p. 770. The paper is here printed in full.

ever, and said that, "It would probably suit Mr. Burr's views to promote this result, to be the chief of the Northern Portion; and, placed at the head of the State of New York, no man would be more likely to succeed." Hamilton contended that Burr would not be true to his promises, if he had made any to the Federalists, but when they had elevated him to power in New York, he would desert them, and simply use his office to form a greater Democratic wing in the North, in opposition to the Jefferson wing, in the hope of being the next President.

In spite of Hamilton's protests the Burr press, two days after Burr's nomination as Governor, opened with the following: "Burr is the man who must be supported or the weight of the Northern States in the scale of the Union is irrecoverably lost. If the southern and particularly the Virginia interests, are allowed to destroy this man, we may give up all hope of ever furnishing a President to the United States."⁷⁸

Jefferson had divined their scheme from the coalition of the Eastern Federalists with the Burrrites; but it gave him no uneasiness. "The object," he said, "of the Federalists is to divide the Republicans, join the majority, and barter with them for the cloak of their name; . . . the price is simple. . . . The idea is clearly to form a basis of a separation of the Union."⁷⁹

What a deplorable and dangerous state of affairs! The Junto supporting Burr as the only hope of carrying through their Northern Confederacy plot; the New York wing of the Republican party, or the Burrrites, supporting him in opposition to Virginia influence, as the only hope of ever furnishing a President to the United States. One contemplating a dissolution of the Union with Burr as leader of the northern section; the other hoping, at some future day, to elect this dangerous man President of the United States. Either scheme, if successful, would have been disastrous. Colonel Burr's prospects, too, seemed to assume an imposing prospect. His Republican friends in New York, though not numerous, were talented, industrious and indefatigable in their exertions; and in view of Federal support, his chances were very encouraging.

The election was carried by the united friends of the admin-

⁷⁸ *The Morning Chronicle*, February 22, 1804; Hamilton's "Republic," vol. 7, p. 777.

⁷⁹ Jefferson's Works, vol. 4, p. 542.

istration, Lewis receiving 35,000 votes, while Burr received 28,000.⁸⁰ Mr. Burr undoubtedly received a very considerable number of Republican votes; he failed, however, in consequence of the defection of a portion of the Federal party. This element of the Federal party was controlled and influenced by the paper read at Albany, just before the nomination, by Alexander Hamilton. It was New York's portion of the Federal party which the Junto could not control. Hamilton's prophecy, that no reliance could be placed in Burr, had very great weight with this class of voters. It was that class whom the Federalists claimed should have nothing to do with the Government.

It was Mr. Hamilton's paper, therefore, coupled with the sound judgment of the New York Federalists, that defeated Aaron Burr. This was the second time that Hamilton had come to the rescue of his country and defeated Aaron Burr; twice he had defeated the "Essex Junto"; but it was the last defeat for Burr's bullet was soon to place his most bitter rival beyond the vale of political strife. Hamilton was the barrier over which the dizzy ambitions of the Union breakers could not climb. Burr's political defeat, followed by Hamilton's tragic death, therefore, checked the Eastern Confederacy plot in its first state of development. This proved to be the greatest blow that had yet befallen the Junto and its members sank into deep despair. Unfortunately, however, there was a later growth from the same root. The plan of separation was not abandoned⁸¹ but only allowed to lie dormant for a while. "Not dead but sleepeth."

The returns of the national election proved beyond question that the Eastern Federalists had no national issue against the administration which had been peaceful, popular, and very successful. Jefferson and Clinton swept the country with ease in November carrying the greater part of New England, Massachusetts unexpectedly included.⁸² Pinckney and King did not get an electoral vote in their respective states. Connecticut, Delaware, and two votes from Maryland gave them 14 against 162 for Jefferson and Clinton.⁸³ The election proved very clear-

⁸⁰ Hammond's "Political Hist. of N. Y.," vol. 1, p. 208; Schouler, vol. 3, p. 70.

⁸¹ Tracy to Plumer, Adams' "Federalism," p. 106.

⁸² Schouler, vol. 3, p. 75.

⁸³ *Ibid.*, appendix electoral table.

ly that Mr. Griswold's fears were not without foundation when he said: "Whilst we are waiting for the time to arrive in New England, it is certain that Democracy is making daily inroads upon us, and our means of resistance are becoming less every day."⁸⁴ The Republicans were daily creeping up to the very doors of the Junto; Vermont and Rhode Island having gone Republican in the State elections, and the National election being so decisive, it showed up the plotters in a light that needs no comment and is severe enough.

Throughout the period from 1800 to 1808, Massachusetts changed her method of choosing her electors three times. Governor Strong, in 1800, sanctioned a resolve to have the Legislature choose the electors of the President and Vice-President. A republican addressing the electors in 1805, declared that this sanction had been influenced by the Junto for the purpose of excluding a Republican from the Presidency.⁸⁵ In 1804, the Junto discovered that electors had best be elected by general ticket in order to preserve the Constitution and the liberty of the people.⁸⁶ But again in 1808, the spirit of the Constitution and the rights of the people required that the choice should be transferred from the people to a federal majority in the Legislature, which majority being the Essex Junto, could by no means represent the character of the State.⁸⁷

The remarkable facility with which the Junto could destroy systems without substituting anything, reminds one of the words of a pious Connecticut priest: "Even hogs," said he, "can root up a garden; but they can never plant one."

⁸⁴ Adams' "Federalism," p. 345, appendix.

⁸⁵ Political Tracts, 1805-1812. Compiled from original documents.

⁸⁶ *The Democrat*, Boston, June 15, 1808.

⁸⁷ *Ibid.*

CHAPTER IV

THE EMBARGO OF 1807 AND THE JUNTO'S PLANS FOR A BRITISH ALLIANCE

After the overthrow of Aaron Burr in New York and the death of Alexander Hamilton, the plotters were without a leader other than Mr. Pickering, whose leadership consisted principally in the preparation of illogical but optimistic documents. Therefore, we find the Northern Confederacy plan lying dormant for quite a long period. In fact, the next secession movement which presents itself is in connection with Jefferson's Embargo Act of 1807.

The Junto, mortified as they had constantly been since 1798 in national affairs, though influential on their own grounds, felt the humiliation of being gradually cast aside by an expanding democracy. More states were in full attune with the Jefferson administration during this protracted Junto sleep than ever before. Merchants without distinction of party had but of neutral frauds.¹ Mr. Pickering, in a letter to Mr. Lowell many years later, says: "Much against his will, and contrary to his own better judgment, Mr. Cabot was placed at the head of a committee which, in 1806, subscribed and sent to Washington the remonstrances drawn by Lloyd² against the British doctrine concerning neutral trade. He signed it simply as a merchant."³

The Junto men decried the Administration for mean temper and a reliance upon moral suasion to protect American commerce, and yet, strangely inconsistent, they counselled to tamest submission to British search and impressment. When the *Chesapeake* affront came, like a blow in the face, to peace and neutrality, their first thought was, how to persuade others to bear it meekly.

Every reader of history is more or less familiar with Jef-

¹ Lodge's "Cabot," p. 315.

² James Lloyd later succeeds J. Q. Adams in U. S. Senate.

³ Lodge's "Cabot," p. 542.

fer's embargo; but, in order to hinge the next secession movement upon it (where it certainly belongs), it will be necessary to explain its purpose, as frequent references to it must be made throughout this chapter. Jay's treaty had not removed very many of the well grounded grievances of the United States against Great Britain and, by degrees, new ones were added to the old. The prospect of a more friendly understanding seemed to be diminishing as time went on. This was due partly to the fact that Jefferson would have all or nothing and partly because Great Britain, despite occasional advances, grew more overbearing every day.

Napoleon found herein a convenient pretense to assert "might before right," and ere long both France and England began to disregard the laws of recognized neutrality. Therefore, England's declaration of a blockade of May 16, 1806, and the Order in Council of November 11, 1807,⁴ on the one hand and Napoleon's Berlin decree of November 26, 1806, and his Milan decree of December 17, 1807,⁵ on the other, made it quite impossible for neutral seafaring nations to sail uninjured. Neither interest nor self respect, therefore, would seem to warrant the United States quietly acquiescing in this violence. But there were still two very strong parties pulling in opposite directions. The Federalists wished to center our warth upon France and thus induce England to adopt a more favorable policy toward us. The administration party would hear nothing of war; they did not want to fight France and feared war with Great Britain.

Jefferson and the Congressional majority, therefore, soon came to the conclusion that it was necessary to take a very decided stand. So on the 18th of December the President recommended an embargo.⁶ Congress immediately passed such a bill as recommended and it became a law December 21, 1807.⁷ This measure closed all American ports to all foreign commerce with the hope that it would show France, and especially England, that we were really a national power, and

⁴ Von Holst's "Constitutional Hist. of U. S.," vol. 1, p. 200.

⁵ *Ibid.*

⁶ Randall's "Jefferson," vol. 3, p. 242.

⁷ Von Holst's "Constitutional Hist. of U. S.," vol. 1, p. 202. Moore's "Int. Law Digest," vol. 5, pp. 1445-1454, gives the above mentioned decrees in full.

force them to recognize and respect our commerce and seamen.

Lord Eldon, Chancellor of England, said in Parliament: "The Order in Council of November 11, was intended to make America, at least sensible to the policy of joining England against France.⁸ Although we have no authority except the newspapers of the day, it seems a fair confession of the British Government's views and we have no reason to question its truth since the Chancellor of England is a member of the Privy Council, and called the keeper of the King's conscience.

But the Administration did not wish to join England against France. It did not wish to join France against England. It only wished to maintain a strict neutrality, aiding neither the one or bowing down to the other. Sir William Scott was president of the British Prize Court from 1806 to 1807, and moulded their doctrines and decisions in conformity with the views of his Government. Under the pretence of supporting what were claimed to be British maritime rights, he extinguished many of the just rights and privileges of other nations.⁹

It is not necessary to say that the embargo fell as heavily upon New England as did the Highway robbery of Great Britain. New England certainly was, owing to her commerce, punished most severely by both England and America. France and England were robbing their ships and impressing their seamen. The United States forbade their ships going to sea and the ships of these nations from landing in their ports, both of which were severe upon the New England commerce. But her motives were very different, and should have appealed to New England patriotism accordingly. It would have been next to impossible for the United States to have attempted any means of redress without striking New England harder than any other portion of the young nation. That does not argue that the embargo was the wisest method of coercion. It does not say that it was a successful measure. It is simply explaining a situation which had to be met. We have seen how the United States Government attempted to meet it, hence it only remains for us to discover how the Embargo was supported by New England and the Junto.

It is very gratifying to be able to say that while New Eng-

⁸ *The Essex Register*, Aug. 31, 1808.

⁹ Perkin's "Late War," p. 21.

land has gasped and struggled against the increasing hardships imposed by France and England, and afterwards, against the constraints of the embargo which pressed heavily upon her, yet most of her sons remained loyal and consonant with the general determination of this country to fight rather than submit to the injustice of Europe. Bound up in commerce, and not being able to divert her capital on such sudden notice, submission to the embargo policy was to her somewhat like suicide to prevent dishonor. But while thus suffering, the thread of her immediate interest was skillfully separated from that of the nation into which it was corded, and the Northern Confederacy remnant began to lead her whither they had sought to lead before. The embargo was like the "bloody shirt" of later times and it was not waived without effect.

This time the movement was far more secret than before. In fact, it is so secret that very little is known about it. Their plans are distinct, however, and, giving them the advantage of every doubt, there is still sufficient evidence to show that the Northern plotters, in this stage of our narrative, conceived and gave life to a plan by which they could resist the embargo on Constitutional grounds; withdraw from the Union by refusing all aid and obedience; peaceably if they could, by means of civil war if they must; and ally themselves with Great Britain. British America was of course to join the confederacy. This, therefore, is the next step toward a Northern Confederacy, beginning soon after the passage of the embargo, living throughout the years 1808 and 1809, and expiring at the passage of the Non-intercourse Act.

Before taking up the real agitation favoring separation and a British Alliance there is an interesting convention in connection with the approaching national election which should not be overlooked. It is interesting and important for two reasons: 1. It was the first attempt at a national nominating convention. 2. It was organized and made a reality by a secret movement of the "Essex Junto." A letter appearing in the *Boston Gazette*, June 27, 1808, discussing the embargo concludes: "All the grandees¹⁰ say, we must do something, or our party will be ruined. The Federalists talk of supporting Clinton for President, because he's against the embargo; and Madison is in favor of it; but they say we must do something."

¹⁰ The reference is to the Junto.

The great question before the Federalist party was to defeat Madison. How was this to be done? Some method was necessary which would be binding on the whole party. They had found the caucus ineffective for party harmony in 1800. In 1808, moreover, there were too few Federalists at Washington to make a caucus practicable. A convention of delegates seemed to be the only alternative.¹¹ The Republican nominees were Madison for President, and George Clinton for Vice-President. Indications soon proved that the Clintonians were bidding for Federalist backing. Clinton disapproved of the embargo, or he let it be understood that he did, because he had hoped for the Presidential honors for himself.¹² Here was the Federalists' opportunity. Clinton had endorsed their policies; why not support him instead of going down to defeat with candidates of their own?

It may be stated that the early state elections had not been wholly without encouragement, although the Republicans had succeeded in electing a Governor in Massachusetts. New York retained a majority of Federalists in her assembly, and Vermont and Connecticut were solid for the Federalists.¹³ These results were brought about mainly through the skillful use, by Junto members, of a potent electioneering weapon furnished them by Jefferson—the embargo. They were quick to see the possibilities of this weapon for arousing the people and did not fail to use it. "The embargo will touch their bone and their flesh, when they must curse its authors," wrote Pickering.¹⁴

With these considerations in their minds, the Junto began in earnest the work of deciding on the moot question of the Presidential nomination. Details of the action of Federalist leaders in Massachusetts, are preserved in two letters from Christopher Gore to Rufus King.¹⁵ The Federalist legislative caucus at Boston appointed a committee of twenty, which in turn appointed a committee to correspond with the Federal-

¹¹ *Am. Hist. Rev.*, No. 4, July, 1912, pp. 744-745.

¹² J. D. Hammond's "Political Parties," N. Y., vol. 1, p. 269; "Am. Hist. Rev.," No. 4, July 1912, p. 746.

¹³ *Ibid.*

¹⁴ Adams' "Federalism," Pickering to Rose, p. 366; "Am. Hist. Rev.," No. 4, July 1912, p. 747.

¹⁵ These letters of June 8 and 16, are in King's "Rugus King," vol. 5, pp. 100-102.

ists in other states on the business of the next election of President and Vice-President, and for the purpose of ascertaining their weight and concerting arrangements for the election.¹⁶ The committee consisted of George Cabot, H. G. Otis, President of the Senate, Christopher Gore, member of the House, Timothy Bigelow, Speaker of the House and James Lloyd, a Boston merchant who had just been chosen Adams' successor in the United States Senate.¹⁷ All were Boston men and all of Junto persuasion, recognizing Pickering as their leader.

The committee held a meeting on June 10, when after a considerable debate, it was deemed advisable to propose a meeting of Federalists, from as many states as could be seasonably notified, at New York the last of that or the beginning of the next month.¹⁸ Here, then, is the original proposition for a would-be national nominating convention.¹⁹ The idea, in this instance, was revolutionary in party machinery, both from a Federalist and from a national point of view. Nominations by conventions of self-chosen delegates was necessarily revolutionary and despotic. The people were bartering away their franchise in promising to support candidates chosen by self-delegated bodies.

The work of securing a national representation in the convention was carried on by personal communications from Boston, New York, and Philadelphia. The Massachusetts committee of correspondence at their meeting on June 10, sent Livermore²⁰ to New Hampshire, Bigelow to Vermont, and Otis to Rhode Island, to arrange for some person, or persons, to represent their states in the New York Convention.²¹ The committee, in this manner, sent men into every Federal stronghold possible.

On August 15, 1808, and the third Monday, this embryo

¹⁶ Gore to King, July 16, King's "King," vol. 5, p. 101.

¹⁷ Adams had resigned his seat in Senate on account of friction between Junto members and himself.

¹⁸ King's "Rufus King," vol. 5, p. 101.

¹⁹ The curious student will search in vain for very much information on this subject. A few letters by the Junto is all the material to be had on this movement.

²⁰ Originally a New Hampshire man; member of Congress from the Essex North district, 1807-1811.

²¹ King's "King," vol. 5, p. 101; *Am. Hist. Rev.*, July 1912, p. 750.

national convention met in New York.²² Its existence could not even be guessed from the Federalist journals, but the coming together of so many noted Federalists did not escape the eyes of the Republican press. The *Boston Independent Chronicle*, August 22, says: "On Friday last a detachment from the Essex Junto passed through Hartford, on their way to New York, there by agreement, to meet the other Choice Spirits, for the purpose of appointing a king to rule over us." Where the session was held can only be a matter of conjecture. We do not know.

Eight states were represented, says Mr. S. E. Morison, "New York, New Hampshire, Vermont, Massachusetts, Connecticut, Pennsylvania, Maryland, and South Carolina."²³ The number and personnel of the members is also largely a matter of conjecture; but it is certain that Massachusetts sent three members because we have a letter from Cabot to Pickering, August 10, 1808, stating: "The gentlemen from this place are Mr. Otis, Mr. Gore, and Mr. Lloyd."²⁴ We do not know the number of representatives. We have no direct evidence as to how the delegates were chosen but there can be little doubt that they were selected by exclusive committees. We have extracts from letters by Hare of Philadelphia and Benson of New York to the Corresponding Committee indicating that such a method was employed.²⁵

Of the proceedings of the 1808 Convention we know no more than the bare results; but the whole question of whether Clinton should be supported or whether separate nominations should be made, was so thoroughly threshed out in the correspondence that we cannot mistake its object, and the trend of the discussion. We know, too, that Charles C. Pinckney was nominated for the office of President and Rufus King for the office of Vice-President. Gore wrote King from Boston, June 16, 1808, saying: "Our people are anxious to support a Fed-

²² Cabot to Pickering, Aug. 10, says: "On Monday next a conference will be held in New York, for the purpose of settling on a Presidential Candidate." "August 15, was date agreed upon," says Morison; see *Am. Hist. Rev.*, July 1912, p. 753.

²³ Morison quotes this information from the Otis Mss., giving as a quotation the above from the N. Y. Committee to the Charleston Committee, September 1808. See *Am. Hist. Rev.*, July 1912, p. 753.

²⁴ Lodge's "Cabot," p. 397.

²⁵ *Am. Hist. Rev.*, July 1912, pp. 748-52.

eral candidate from New York instead of one from South Carolina ; provided there's the possibility of success."²⁶

Pinckney's nomination was due largely to the hope of capturing his native state and to the wish of avoiding the stigma of sectionalism.²⁷ And the above was about the only opposition to his nomination after Clinton was ruled out.

The Convention having been summoned and conducted in secret, was to be extremely discreet in announcing its nominations. The original plan for the public announcement, and the reasons for making an eleventh hour change are given in a letter from Thomas Fitzsimon's of Philadelphia to Gore, Otis, and Lloyd, the Massachusetts delegation. "When we separated at New York," it says, "it was understood that the result of our Conference, should not be made public until the event of the election in Pennsylvania²⁸ should be made known and until the Conferees from that state should deem a publication of it proper. Circumstances have since occurred which, in their opinion, rendered any publication of that kind inexpedient, and led them to conclude that the safer course would be to let our friends in each state announce the candidates to their fellow citizens, at such time, and in such way as they should think best. We were led to this conclusion from having observed something like a jealousy in our friends at having a nomination so important decided upon by so small a number as we were, and without any special authority for the purpose. Hence we deem it most prudent that it should appear the result of general sentiment rather than the choice of a few to bind their party."²⁹

An article in the *Boston Gazette*, October 20, entitled, "Grand Federal Nomination," makes the following statement: "We have the satisfaction to learn, from information collected from every part of the Union, that one common sentiment prevails among the Federalists, with regard to candidates for the first offices in the National Government; that the men selected by the approving voice of the whole American party, to preserve the Union, and to prevent a calamitous war, are for President Hon. C. C. Pinckney, for Vice-President Hon. R.

²⁶ King's "Rufus King," vol. 5, p. 101.

²⁷ *Am. Hist. Rev.*, July 1912, p. 758.

²⁸ State election.

²⁹ Printed in the *Am. Hist. Rev.*, July 1912, p. 759.

King. In Massachusetts, a formal announcement of the nomination of these great parties has been delayed for the sole purpose of collecting the sentiments of the great body of Federalists—the true Americans in other states.” In several lines above we notice that, “These men were selected by the approving voice of the whole American party,” but, “A formal announcement had been delayed to collect the sentiments of the great body of Federalists.” “Consistency, thou art a jewel.” There was no formal announcement, therefore, until two or three weeks before the election, although it was pretty generally known before that time.⁸⁰

The frankness of the letters quoted and referred to in connection with the Convention makes comment almost superfluous, but the writer cannot refrain from making a few thrusts at this select body of “well born” and congenial gentlemen who were chosen by their friends to settle, in a quiet and leisurely manner, the great questions which so deeply concerned the party. The body of voters had absolutely no voice in the convention’s deliberations. This 1808 conference (or convention) compares favorably with other Federalist machinery of the time. It was based on the old dictum: “We, the ‘well born,’ must govern without the slightest co-operation by the people. We do not ask their advice but their implicit obedience is required. They are to vote for candidates nominated they know not how, because it was thought best, ordained and established by the Federal fathers, that we, the choicest spirits, should lead them. This machinery failed for the same reason that the party failed. It ought to suppress and to curb public opinion rather than to guide and lead it.

The secret convention, representing only the leaders, was again employed in 1812, after which it passes out of existence with the Federalist party. It remained for the Democrats of the thirties to discover that nomination by convention could be made a more satisfactory method.

The first gun of the Massachusetts, and incidentally, of the presidential campaign, was Pickering’s violent attack on the administration policy in his letter to Governor Sullivan, February 16, 1808.⁸¹ In this most extraordinary letter⁸² by Pick-

⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, many letters and journals are quoted from in this number of the *Review* in support of this statement.

⁸¹ Lodge’s “Cabot,” p. 380, Pickering confidentially to Cabot. Adams’

ering we have a very good duplicate of Hamilton's attack upon the Adams' administration. The burden of Pickering's pen is that Jefferson withheld papers from the Emperor of France which should be made public. That the withholding of such papers was responsible for the passage of the embargo, is the point he makes, or hopes to make. He says: "Had these papers been honorable he would have been anxious to disclose them. That they are of an entirely different nature, that they are dishonorable, that they are ruinous to our commercial interests, and dangerous to our liberty and independence, we are left to infer. Above all, let him unfold our actual situation with France." In short, Mr. Pickering tells his people that Jefferson is pushing them into a war with Great Britain by withholding papers, which if disclosed, would satisfy every one that France is the common enemy. No attack upon Jefferson could have been more effective than this, and it was carefully calculated to stir up resistance in the commercial states.

It is still more wonderful how the Junto attempted to justify England's impressment policy. To quote again from Pickering's letter: "The British ships of war agreeable to a right claimed and exercised for ages,—a right claimed and exercised during the whole of the administrations of Washington, Adams, and Jefferson,—continue to take some of the British seamen and with them a small number of ours, because of the difficulty to always distinguish an Englishman from an American."⁸³ Of course England would not take Americans but through mistaken identity.

We cannot but wonder in that written and received authority we would be most likely to find a justification of the rights Pickering claims for Great Britain's conduct? In what usage, except her own will, could it be found? It can imply nothing but the right to search neutral vessels upon the high seas in time of peace. "We consider a neutral flag," says Monroe, January 5, 1804, "on the high seas as a safeguard to those sailing under it." Whether we consult the Law of Nations or the dictates of justice, no pretext can be found for the British impressments from American ships on the high seas.

"Federalism," p. 193-197: Hildreth's "Hist. of the U. S.," vol. 3, pp. 76-77; King's "Rufus King," vol. 5, p. 87, Gore to King.

⁸³ Original copy in "Political Tracts," 1805-1812; *Boston Gazette*, July 25, 1808.

⁸⁴ Niles' Register, vol. 4, p. 233, speech of Gov. Strong.

Mr. Pickering waited until it was ascertained that the Rose Mission³⁴ would fail, and then wrote his letter to the Governor of Massachusetts, denouncing the embargo and calling for joint resistance against it by the Commercial States.³⁵ It was both in form and substance an appeal from the Government of the Union to the Government of the State of Massachusetts, with no other purpose than to stimulate the power of the separate state to a resistance of force against a law of the Union; and it contained the first proposal for a concerted move by the commercial states for the same purpose.³⁶ It was the plan of 1804 reproduced by the same individual who had then appealed to Hamilton to lead the Junto through the "deep waters." As in 1804, also, a few plain spoken letters, fortunately preserved from the flames, disclose to posterity plots which statesmen of that day denounced without proving. What the English called "Colonel Pickering's Party"³⁷ certainly existed at this time and its leader, the ex-Secretary and Massachusetts Senator, tunneled like a mole to undermine a mountain.

The embargo, therefore, was yet only an experiment, and a temporary precaution, so to speak, when Pickering put quill to a lengthy diatribe against the Administration, and hurled a firebrand upon the stage. One copy of this paper was addressed to Cabot to go to the printer in case Governor Sullivan failed to act as his publisher.³⁸ The Governor, be it to his honor, refused on the ground that it was, "A seditious and disorganizing production."³⁹ More than that, Pickering says: "The letter was rudely returned."⁴⁰ Mr. Cabot, in his reply to Pickering's request that he superintend its publication, said: "This day will issue from the press a copy of your letter to the Governor, which he dared not to communicate. Five thousand copies will be struck in pamphlet form and it will be reprinted in the newspapers. Probably, you will receive a pamphlet with this letter. This excellent address is *well cal-*

³⁴ Mr. Rose, a special Envoy, despatched to the United States, to discuss through the winter the *Chesapeake* affair with Madison, and then do nothing.

³⁵ Adams' "Federalism," p. 195.

³⁶ See above references to letter.

³⁷ Schouler, vol. 2, p. 181.

³⁸ Lodge's "Cabot," p. 367; Hildreth, vol. 3, p. 77.

³⁹ Hildreth, vol. 3, p. 77.

⁴⁰ Lodge's "Cabot," p. 380, Pickering to Cabot.

culated to rouse us from our apathy; and, if we are fit for anything but slavery,⁴¹ all New England might be brought to act with effect."⁴²

The letter was unexampled and in principle unconstitutional. The Senate of the United States is a branch of the legislature; and each senator is a representative, not of a single state but of the whole Union. His vote is not the vote of his state, but his own individually; and his constituents have not even the power of recalling him, nor of controlling his constitutional action by their instructions. "This was the first instance in the history of the Constitution," says J. Q. Adams, "where a Senator of the United States had made such an appeal to the government of a state by whose legislature he had been chosen. Its principle was itself a dissolution of the Union,—a transfer of the action of the national government to that of the separate state upon objects exclusively delegated to the authority of the Union."⁴³

In 1828, when Adams was President, a body of Massachusetts Federalists addressed a letter to him demanding proof of such statements as had been given out regarding the Junto twenty years before. Adams replied that he had never doubted that the object of Mr. Pickering was the ultimate substitution of a Northern Confederacy, in alliance with Great Britain for that of the United States; and that he had good reasons for believing that James Hillhouse,⁴⁴ then Senator from Connecticut, concurred in these views.⁴⁵ Adams was at that time (1808) Senator with Pickering from Massachusetts, but later resigned his position and supported the embargo.

To his letter, a step, even more reprehensible, succeeded. Pickering, being at Washington during the period of Rose's negotiations, held secret communications with that individual, his object being plainly to stiffen this Chesapeake diplomat, who bore terms disgraceful enough, and through him to as-

⁴¹ Slaves to the Republican administration and to the South. Italics my own.

⁴² Lodge's "Cabot," p. 380. Italics my own.

⁴³ Adams' "Federalism," p. 195.

⁴⁴ Pickering admits as much in a letter to Cabot March 11, 1808. See Lodge's "Cabot," p. 380.

⁴⁵ Adams' "Federalism," p. 107; His second reply to the Mass. Feds. The first reply begins on p. 46, same work. Correspondence complete, as far as we know.

sure the English ministry that they had only to let us alone in order to find that the embargo would curse its authors.⁴⁶ "You have only to travel to Boston," he assured him, "to find that our best citizens consider the interests of the United States interwoven with those of Great Britain, and that our safety depends on hers. Men, thus enlightened, could they but control the measures of their own government, *would give them a direction mutually beneficial to the two nations.*"⁴⁷ And it was for this purpose chiefly that I have more than once expressed to you my hope that you would see them in person, by traveling through the country as far as Boston.⁴⁸ Given up as the people are to strong delusions, to believe lies, it seems impossible that the general deception should continue much longer."⁴⁹ In other words, "I am doing everything in my power to poison the minds of the New England people against the Jefferson Administration, and resorting to this secret and underhand relation with you, in the hope that you will prepare your home government for an alliance in case New England can be persuaded to revolt."

Pickering went so far as to hand over to Rose his private letters from Cabot and King for confidential perusal.⁵⁰ He sent him Sullivan's letter explaining why he (Governor Sullivan) did not publish Pickering's letter; he sent Boston newspapers and kept Rose informed generally as to public opinion in New England.⁵¹ He impressed upon Rose the social and the political importance of the Essex Junto, to which he belonged, and tried to show how the brakes could be put on after the close of "Jefferson's reign,"⁵² even though Mr. Madison should succeed, which was extremely problematical.

When Rose left the United States, Pickering besought him to keep up a correspondence, designating his own nephew, Samuel Williams, a London merchant, and formerly Consul, as a suitable person through whom their letters could be deliv-

⁴⁶ Private correspondence between Pickering and Rose. See Adams' "Federalism," pp. 366-373; *Ibid.*, pp. 46-107; Schouler, 3.181.2.

⁴⁷ Italics my own.

⁴⁸ He refers to the Junto.

⁴⁹ Adams' "Federalism," p. 366. Pickering to Rose.

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 366.

⁵¹ *Ibid.*, p. 369.

⁵² *Ibid.*, p. 367.

ered.⁵³ Rose indulged this request after his return home,⁵⁴ but whether he imparted ministerial confidence in return, or whether he simply used adroit flattery and encouragement while more subtle agencies were employed, we cannot say. In the light of subsequent events, however, we are safe in assuming the latter.

In order to give some idea as to how Mr. Rose met Pickering's advances I will quote from a letter written just after he had received the letter sent him from King: "I avail myself thankfully of your permission," he says, "to keep that gentleman's letter, which I am sure will carry high authority where I can use it confidentially, and whither it is most important that what I conceive to be right impressions should be conveyed. It is not to you that I need protest that rancorous impressions of jealousy or ill-will have never existed here; but it is to be feared that at some time or another the extremest point of human forbearance may be reached. The night of delusion appears to vanish rapidly; may no clouds obscure the rising sun. If the day breaks fairly, it will be daylight, not only to yourselves, but to dear and important and universal objects, seem more clearly through the darkness which blinds so many, by none, or more forcibly than by yourself."⁵⁵ This quotation needs no comment, for the beauty of its construction and the patriotic impulses which alone could prompt such an utterance are able to stand alone.

"Rejoice with us," says a Boston correspondent to the *St. James Chronicle*,⁵⁶ "our efforts are at last, I am delighted to believe, about to succeed. By the papers⁵⁷ you will see that Massachusetts has yielded good fruits for our labor and money. We have hard work to do yet, but the prospect of success gives us new vigor. It was a master stroke, your sending Rose here to amuse this Government, to gain time and multiply the means for our last resort—the election. Everywhere things look promising. Your Government has no need to give an inch."

Another article⁵⁸ dated London, June 28, 1808, furnishes

⁵³ *Ibid.*, p. 370.

⁵⁴ Schouler, vol. 3, p. 182.

⁵⁵ Adams' "Federalism," p. 367. Rose to Pickering.

⁵⁶ *The Democrat*, Boston, June 18, 1898. The above copied from the *St. James Chronicle*.

⁵⁷ Papers sent by the Junta for the English ministry to peruse.

⁵⁸ *The Democrat*, Boston, June 8, 1808.

us the English view of the situation. It says: "The last files from Boston and other papers from the United States give us most pleasing accounts of Federalism and its growth. That Federalism is gaining ground in Vermont, New Hampshire, Massachusetts, and New York, in particular, indeed, seems to assure the season close at hand when we shall reap a glorious reward for all the labor and expense lavished in that country."

If we can credit these newspaper articles, and their testimony will be well supported later, we must believe that Pickering and Rose were not the only interested parties. Indeed, Pickering is only the mouthpiece of the Junto, but that is giving him the leadership, when we remember that talk, "Yea, much fine talk" was the greater part of their programme. It can only be a matter of conjecture what amount of influence was exerted by Rose. He undoubtedly gave Canning⁵⁹ the cue for managing the American situation.⁶⁰ Pickering we may believe used the Rose information⁶¹ in furthering fomenting discontent in New England against the embargo. The one thing that made the embargo grind so severely upon the susceptibilities of New England was the charge so constantly reiterated and more especially after the failure of the Rose mission, that Jefferson's policy was being constantly dictated by Napoleon, in preparation for a French alliance.

The question, therefore, naturally arises: Whence this injurious calumny? J. Q. Adams insisted that it came from the eastward, though British authorities over the border in correspondence with citizens of Massachusetts.⁶² Mr. Adams says that he told Jefferson in a confidential interview, March, 1808, that he (Adams) had seen a letter from the Governor of Nova Scotia⁶³ which made the charge, obviously intended to propagate the calumny that Mr. Jefferson and his Administration were corruptly subservient to the influence of France; and that this influence was exercised to kindle a war between the United States and Great Britain, and to effect a revolution in the government of the United States, and the conquest by

⁵⁹ British Secretary for Foreign Affairs.

⁶⁰ Schouler, vol. 3, p. 182.

⁶¹ Some of the letters which passed are missing, hence we do not know very much about the intrigue.

⁶² Adams' "Federalism," p. 112.

⁶³ Niles' Register, vol. 35, p. 138.

France of the British possessions on this continent.⁶⁴ Mr. Jefferson stated that the interview took place and repeated the conversation as he remembered it, agreeing with Adams.⁶⁵ His information is further substantiated by the "Henry Mission" of which we shall speak later. John Lowell makes an analysis⁶⁶ of the correspondence between the American Administration and that of France and Great Britain, with an attempt to show the real causes of failure on the part of America. In this remarkable analysis the Jacobin leaders, Jefferson and Madison, were governed all the time by French instructions. He accounts in this way for the great injustice shown Great Britain, and quotes Mr. Jefferson as saying to the Emperor: "Repeal so much only of your decrees as relate to us, or give assurances and explanations to the same effect, and we will declare war against your enemy." But to Great Britain he says: Repeal all your orders—repeal them in their entirety and we will restore you to your old place—nothing more." Such volcanic outbursts from Mr. Lowell were intended to have and could have but one influence, namely, to inflame the people with an intense hatred for the administration. Partiality to France instead of Great Britain was the nearest way to the hearts of many of the New England people. He tells us in No. 7, "That the only cause for the embargo is to be found in the demands and threats of France."⁶⁷ It is to be regretted that Mr. Lowell does not give some idea of the nature of these threats which so greatly moulded the Jacobin policies. We know of a French sympathy in America, and have spoken of it, but we must admit that Mr. Lowell's statements, or some of them at least, were made to order. Only a man embarked on a mission of evil could blaspheme his own government and praise that of Great Britain for the purpose of causing a revolt.

Mr. James Russell, in a series of Articles signed "falkland," and published in the *Columbian Centinel*, beginning September 10, 1808, discusses the subject in a very different manner. These articles are entitled, "A Separation of the States," and attempt to show by statistics that New England's area, population, and resources are sufficient to enable her to maintain

⁶⁴ Adams' "Federalism," pp. 112-113.

⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 136. Jefferson's statement.

⁶⁶ "Tracts on American Politics," 1795-1808. Nine documents.

⁶⁷ These papers were numbered from 1 to 9.

an independent government. With New York included, as a matter of course, in the Confederacy, a comparison is made between that section and the Southern States, particularly between Massachusetts and Virginia. With the amount, increase, and kind of population; with the number of acres, population per acre, and value per acre, he gets a ratio of about 2 to 1 in favor of New England. That is, New England has grown proportionately about twice as fast as the South. He concludes, therefore, that with the State of New York added to New England the Confederacy could probably maintain a population equal to that of Great Britain and certainly greater than that of Spain.

Mr. Russell gives the following reason for his articles: "The policy of Virginia demands nothing less than the sacrifice of greater interests of New England as the only condition on which she will adhere to the Union. She must and will govern us, with a policy that will forever cripple and destroy us, or separate from us and leave us to pursue our own systems, supported by our own resources. These I have attempted to estimate to assist the people of New England in forming their judgment of the consequences of such an event."

This was the most dignified argument offered to the people of New England in regard to a new government; but perhaps the dignity of it was overbalanced by its narrowness. He either lost sight of, or chose to ignore, the fact that the Great West and Southwest would sooner or later join the southern dynasty if New England should withdraw into a little corner of the Continent. Therefore, he must have made the argument with the belief, at least, that British America would readily join the New England Union, and the Great Britain herself, would immediately join in alliance, otherwise the Confederacy would have been impossible.

This brings us to the election of 1808 and we will pause long enough to notice its results. We know that Madison received more than two-thirds of all the electoral votes, 122 out of 176. The Federalists, as we have seen, renominated Pinckney and King; and they carried no electoral college outside of New England, excepting that of Delaware. In New England state elections, however, Federalism met with much greater success because of its opposition to the National policy. Embargo candidates were defeated in New Hampshire, Rhode

Island, and Vermont. In this section, the opposition grew constantly more defiant. Pickering's Public Letter with its bold imputations and base motives made itself felt at this election.

There were many other ingenious arguments advanced by the Junto to show why Madison ought not to have been elected. Perhaps the most amusing one was that he was ruled by his wife,⁶⁸ and, on this account, was unfit for such high office. To this we can only say that it is a pity that this lady was not taken and kept as a hostage in New England during the good behavior of her husband. He might then have performed the duties of a distinguished statesman, as ably as he had in the Revolution before these alarming petticoats were put on. But, of course, the embargo was the one great argument advanced by Federalist opposition.

The *Boston Gazette* of July 25, 1808, says: "The Democrats have brought themselves and the country into this vile scrape, and now they shift the blame to Pickering and his set. They stigmatize the Federalists as traitors for their opposition to the wonder-working embargo; but all their cunning and all their wisdom consists in hiding their foolish and fatal measures."

It is not just, however, to say that all radical and violent statements were confined to Federalist papers and Federalist writers. Republicans were wholly convinced that the Essex Junto was doing much more harm than the embargo and they did not fail to assert as much. For example, the *Baltimore-American*, June 11, 1808, makes the following comment: "Since by artifice, chicanery, and juggling, the Essex Junto succeeded in throwing the legislative power of Massachusetts into the hands of a faction, disposed to be subservient to a foreign power, their first act of legislation was an anathema against the embargo. They admit it to be the duty of government to cultivate peace and amity with all nations; and yet denounce the only measure capable of enforcing its existence. They deny that Congress has the right to pass such a law and yet admit that a temporary embargo, on some occasions may be necessary. The British Monarch invites our citizens to infringe our laws by formal proclamation, and the Legislature of Massachusetts organizes itself in formal opposition to the general government as far as words will go, in order to furnish

⁶⁸ *The Columbian Detector*, Boston, November 18, 1808.

our enemies sustenance and comfort while they continue their depredations."

The opinion spread that the embargo was unconstitutional, and, if so, that it ought to be resisted. This was a Junto doctrine and the people were beginning to embrace it as though it were true. In town-meeting addresses the language of petition gave place to remonstrance, and that of remonstrance to threat; "passive obedience and non-resistance," said one of these in November, "can no longer be considered a virtue."⁶⁹

The people were constantly instigated by the Junto⁷⁰ to forcible resistance against the embargo, and jury after jury acquitted the violators of it, upon the ground that it was unconstitutional, assumed in the face of a solemn decision of the district court of the United States.⁷¹ A separation of the Union was openly advocated in the public prints and a Convention of delegates of the New England States, to meet at New Haven, was intended and proposed.⁷²

At the beginning of the final session of Congress, November, 1808, Hillhouse of Connecticut, and Lloyd and Pickering, of Massachusetts introduced resolutions for the immediate repeal of the embargo.⁷³ Added to this was a long exposition of eastern troubles; and it became very clear to the supporters of the measure that the Junto was clearly but surely inviting trouble.

Mr. Giles and several other members of Congress wrote J. Q. Adams (then a private citizen in Boston) informing him of the Junto measures and solicited his advice upon the subject.⁷⁴ Adams replied frankly, and in confidence, as he had been addressed, and had recommended, most earnestly, the substitution of a non-intercourse bill for the embargo. He urged that a continuance of the embargo much longer would certainly be met by forcible resistance, supported by the Legislature, and probably by the judiciary of the state.⁷⁵ That to quell that resistance, if force should be resorted to by the government, would produce a civil war; and in that event, he

⁶⁹ Schouler's "Am. Hist.," vol. 3, pp. 184-185.

⁷⁰ Niles Register, vol. 35, 138.

⁷¹ *Ibid.*

⁷² *Ibid.*

⁷³ Schouler's "Am. Hist.," vol. 3, p. 185; Von Holst, vol. 1, p. 226, note.

⁷⁴ Niles Register, vol. 35, p. 138; Adams' "Federalism," p. 46.

⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, also see Von Holst, vol. 1, pp. 222-223, note.

had no doubt the leaders of the party would secure the co-operation with them of Great Britain. That their object was, and has been for several years a dissolution of the Union, and the establishment of a separate confederation. "This," he says, "I know from unequivocal evidence, although not proveable in a court of law; and that in the case of civil war, the aid of Great Britain to effect the purpose would be as surely resorted to, as it would be indispensably necessary to the design."⁷⁶

In support of Mr. Adams' position let us notice the opinions of some gentlemen who are not so likely to be discredited, owing to Mr. Adams' relations with the Junto. DeWitt Clinton made the following statement, January 31, 1809, in a speech in the Senate of New York: "It is perhaps known to but few, that the project of a dismemberment of this Union is not a novel plan, growing out of the recent measures of the Government, as has been pretended. It has been cherished by a number of individuals for a series of years. A few months before the death of a distinguished citizen,⁷⁷ it was proposed to him to enlist his great talents in the promotion of this nefarious scheme."⁷⁸

In a letter to Joseph White, Jr., dated Washington, January 4, 1809, Joseph Story⁷⁹ makes this statement: "If I may judge from the letters I have seen from the various districts of Massachusetts, it is a prevalent opinion there—and, in truth many friends from New England States write us, that there is great danger of resistance to the laws, and great probability that the Essex Junto have resolved to attempt a separation of the Eastern States from the Union; and if the embargo continues, that their plan may receive support from our Yeomanry."⁸⁰ Again on January 9, 1809, we find Mr. Story writing Samuel Fay in this regard. He says: "It seems almost impossible that Massachusetts will ever come to this scheme; yet, I confess that I have great fears when I perceive that the public prints openly advocate a resort to arms, to sweep away the present embarrassment of commerce."⁸¹

⁷⁶ Niles' Register, vol. 35, p. 138; Adams Federalism, p. 46; Von Holst, vol. 1, pp. 222-223, note.

⁷⁷ Alexander Hamilton.

⁷⁸ Plumer's "Life of Plumer," p. 302.

⁷⁹ Associate Justice of the Supreme Court of the United States.

⁸⁰ Story's "Life of Story," vol. I, p. 174.

⁸¹ *Ibid.*, p. 182.

Mr. Adams' statements would seem to be sufficiently sustained, by the quotations we have used, but in order to show that Mr. Jefferson himself was alarmed, we will quote a few lines from a letter written to Mr. Randolph January 2, 1809. It reads in part: "The Monarchists of the North have been able to make so successful use of the embargo as to have federalized the South Eastern States and endangered New York, and they now mean to organize their opposition by the regular powers of their State Governments. The Massachusetts legislature which is to meet the middle of the month, it is believed, will call a convention to consider the question of a separation of the Union, and to propose it to the whole country east of the North River, and they are assured the protection of Great Britain."⁸³ In the same letter he goes on to say that, "We must save the Union! But our difficulties do not end here; for if war takes place with England we have no security that she will not offer neutrality and commerce to New England and that the latter will not accept it." These men saw plainly the situation and knew that something must be done to check the onward march. That is why non-intercourse was urged by the friends of the Administration at this time.

But, before the discussion of a non-intercourse bill got fairly under way, Congress passed the "Force Bill" January 9, 1809.⁸⁴ This bill is a familiar bit of history and every one knows, perhaps, that it was passed simply to enforce the embargo. The embargo was only in theory a national measure. American commerce was centered in the East. It could be, in reality, therefore, nothing but a sectional measure, and nothing leads to rebellion so surely as sectional discontent. But as we have said any check attempted on Great Britain's impressment policy would have fallen most heavily upon this section.

The newly enacted Force Bill, therefore, was ushered into the presence of a people whose spirits already boiled with rebellion and discontent. What did it mean? It meant simply this: each Governor was requested and expected to appoint some officer of the militia of known respect for the laws, in or near each port of entry of his State, with orders when applied to by the Collector of the District, to assemble a sufficient force of his militia and to employ them efficaciously to main-

⁸³ Mass. Hist. Papers, vol. I, p. 130, seventh series.

⁸⁴ Annals of Cong., 10th Cong., 2nd Sess., 1808-1809, p. 1798.

tain the embargo. It was therefore, a radical measure at this time, and it only added fuel to the flame.⁸⁴

The people in the Eastern Section were now stirred, to the satisfaction of the Junta, and memorials were sent to the State Legislature declaring the embargo unconstitutional and the raising of troops to enforce it a menace to civil liberty. Anticipating the Force Act, Otis and Gore wrote Quincy and Pickering, who were in Congress, to ask what to do next.⁸⁵ In the letter sent by Otis to Quincy we have the first mention of a Hartford Convention. "Will you," he adds, "talk over this subject with *Our Little Spartan Band*, and favor me in season with the result of your collected wisdom?"⁸⁶ Pickering's reply to Gore is of the most vital interest and in no sense should it be omitted. "Pray look into the Constitution, and particularly into the 10th article of the Amendments. How are the powers reserved to the States respectively, or to the people, to be maintained, *but by the respective states judging for themselves and putting their negative on the usurpations of the general government?*"⁸⁷

What was this but Virginia and Kentucky Nullification and by the very men who had then (1796) so bitterly condemned it? Prominent judges and theologians even began, at this time, to foment a New England insurrection.⁸⁸ Dr. Dwight, it is said, preached a sermon using the text: "Wherefore, come out from among them, and be separate, saith the Lord."

The legislatures, particularly of Massachusetts and of Connecticut, sent remonstrances to the National Congress and in no uncertain terms expressed their opinions of these Acts. The downfall of this forcible embargo must be attributed to the panic which New England produced at Washington. No doubt the careworn Jefferson never forgot how these New England towns pelted and pattered resolutions upon his head. We must also credit this Junto panic with the change of the date for the next Congress from May 22, to March 4. Jeffer-

⁸⁴ Schouler, vol. 2, pp. 190-193; Sullivan's "Public Men of the Revolution"; Adams' "Federalism."

⁸⁵ Adams' "Federalism," pp. 373-375.

⁸⁶ Adams' "Federalism," p. 375; Otis to Quincy.

⁸⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 378. The italics are my own.

⁸⁸ Schouler, vol. 2; Adams' "Federalism."

son thought⁸⁹ that by promising a repeal of the embargo he could keep the East quiet until that time, but his supporters in Congress saw very plainly that the Union would not be preserved that long. The fourth of March was set, therefore, for the assembling of Congress and the embargo was repealed on the ninth. "The alternative," said Jefferson later, "was repeal or Civil War."

It is necessary now to consider the "Henry Mission" before attempting any discussion of "What might have been."

At the beginning of the year 1809 the Governor General of Canada, J. H. Craig, opened communications with one John Henry,⁹⁰ then residing at Montreal, asking this gentleman if he would undertake a secret and confidential mission to Boston.⁹¹ Mr. Henry assured the Governor that he would undertake the mission and would be ready to start before his instructions could be made out.⁹²

The instructions which Mr. Craig gave Henry, dated February 6, 1809, and marked "most secret and confidential," throw a bright and illuminating light upon the British-New England Alliance, which we are trying to reveal. We will, therefore, make some quotations from this document and see if the real object of the mission is not disclosed so that there can be no doubt.

"The principal object which I commend to your attention," says Mr. Craig in these instructions, is the endeavor to obtain the most accurate information of the true state of affairs in that part of the Union, which, from its wealth, the number of inhabitants, and the known intelligence and ability of several of its leading men, must naturally possess a very considerable influence over, and will indeed, probably lead, the other Eastern States of America, in the *part that they may take at this important crisis*.⁹³ The Federalists, as I understand, have, at all

⁸⁹ See Correspondence, Mass. Hist. Collection, vol. 1, p. 135, seventh series.

⁹⁰ Very little seems to be known about Mr. Henry. Niles Register, vol. 2, states that he was a Captain in the Provincial Army, of the U. S. 1798. Fisk's speech, p. 28, same reference says: "he was an Englishman but had long resided in this country. He had evidently been in the service of Great Britain, also."

⁹¹ Am. State Papers, For. Rel., vol. 3, p. 546; Niles' Register, vol. 2, p. 20.

⁹² *Ibid.*

⁹³ Italics are my own.

times, discovered a leaning to this disposition, and their being under its peculiar influence at this moment is the more to be expected, from their having ill-founded ground for their hopes of being nearer the attainment of their object than they have been for some years past. It has been supposed that if the Federalists of the Eastern States should be successful in obtaining that decided influence which may enable them to direct the public opinion, it is not impossible that, rather than submit to a continuance of the difficulties and distress to which they are now subject, they will exert that influence to bring about a separation from the general Union. The earliest information on this subject, may be of the greatest consequence, to our Government, as it may also be that it should be informed how far, in such an event, they would look up to England for assistance, or be disposed to enter into a connection with us."⁹⁴

Mr. Craig further instructed Henry to get all the information possible in passing through Vermont. He inclosed credentials which read: "The bearer, Mr. John Henry, is employed by me, and full confidence may be placed in him for any communication which any person may wish to make to me in the *business* committed to him, etc."⁹⁵ They then agreed upon a cipher for carrying on a secret correspondence, using the letters, A.B. for Henry's signature.⁹⁶

When the matter came up before the House three years later Mr. Fisk, in a very pointed speech declared that, "Erskine,"⁹⁷ while here, at that very time, was in the same business that Henry was sent to perform."⁹⁸ He goes on to affirm that Erskine wrote a letter, to his knowledge, in which he informed his home government that he (Erskine) "Had endeavored by the most strict and diligent enquiries into the views and strength of the Federal party, to ascertain to what extent they would be willing and able to resist the measures of the party in power, and how far they could carry the opinions of this country with them in their attempt to remove the embargo."⁹⁹ Mr. Fisk quotes from other letters written by Minister Erskine

⁹⁴ *Ibid.* The *entire correspondence* as submitted by Henry is printed in the two references above.

⁹⁵ Am. State Papers, vol. 2, p. 547; Niles' Register, vol. 2, p. 20.

⁹⁶ *Ibid.*

⁹⁷ British Minister to America.

⁹⁸ Niles' Register, vol. 2, p. 28. Copy of Fisk's speech printed here.

⁹⁹ *Ibid.*

that it would seem without making further quotations, that we are justified in assuming upon the evidence given that Rose, Craig, and Erskine, were all working under instructions from their home Ministry.

Of course, it is clear that the Junto and British sympathizers were halting upon "unpreparedness" as we used that term in our last chapter. How far would public opinion and the votes of New England support them? The embargo was being used just as the "bloody shirt" of later times, and to what extent the people were being influenced and were prepared to act it was a part of Mr. Henry's business to find out. His instructions not only covered this point but every other possibility that suggested itself.

Supplied, therefore, with everything but manhood, Henry began his journey to Boston. According to instructions his first stop was Burlington, Vermont, from which place he addressed two letters to Mr. Craig.¹⁰⁰ The impressions and information gained in this State were highly satisfactory to the scheme. He says: "The people are so disgusted with the embargo and the Administration that if Massachusetts should take a bold step toward resisting the execution of these laws, the people of Vermont would lend their hearty co-operation."

The next document we have from Henry is dated Amherst, New Hampshire.¹⁰¹ In this State he finds the sentiment pretty much as in Vermont. He adds the bit of information, however, that the United States will not go to war with Great Britain unless they can force His Majesty's Government to commit some act of hostility, thereby placing the responsibility upon Great Britain. This declaration suggests quite a new line of thought. We had not looked upon the acts of the Administration as intended to provoke further hostility from Great Britain, but we are glad to record this as an opinion of Henry's that he found such to be true in New England. He concludes, however, by saying: "It is highly probable that other means will be employed to excite England to such an act."¹⁰²

We next follow Henry into Boston where he remains for about three months watching and reporting the trend of affairs to Mr. Craig. In a document of March 7, 1809, he sums up

¹⁰⁰ Am. State Papers, vol. 3, p. 547.

¹⁰¹ Am. State Papers, vol. 3, p. 548; Niles' Register, vol. 2, p. 22.

¹⁰² *Ibid.*, p. 549.

the situation, as it is revealed to him there, as follows: "I have now ascertained, with as much accuracy as possible, the course intended to be pursued by the party in Massachusetts that is opposed to the measures and politics of the administration of the General Government. I have always given an opinion that a declaration of war is not to be expected; but, contrary to all reasonable calculations, should the Congress possess spirit and independence enough to place their popularity in jeopardy by so strong a measure, the Legislature of Massachusetts will give the tone to the neighboring states, will declare itself permanent until a new election of members, invite a congress, to be composed of delegates from the Federal States, and erect a separate government for their common defense and common interests."¹⁰³

The Congress would probably begin by abrogating the offensive laws, and adopting a plan for the maintenance of the power and authority thus assumed. By such an act they would be in a position to make or to receive proposals from Great Britain. Scarcely any other aid would be necessary, and perhaps none other required, than a few vessels of war from Halifax station to protect the maritime towns from the little navy which is at the disposal of the National Government. What permanent connection between Great Britain and this section might grow out of the civil commotion, no one is prepared to describe; but it seems that a strict alliance must result of necessity."¹⁰⁴

The Non-intercourse law of March 9, 1809, raised the embargo with all foreign states except France and England. This law quieted the cry for separation and practically crushed the Northern Confederacy plan for the time being. Mr. Henry's mission to Boston loses interest to our narrative; therefore, and we must soon follow him back to Canada. He thought it necessary, however to remain some weeks longer to sketch passing events. He did so and made some very interesting observations after the above date.

For instance, on March 13, he writes: "I lament the repeal of the embargo, because it was calculated to accelerate the progress of these states toward a revolution that would put an

¹⁰³ Niles' Register, vol. 7, p. 185. See article entitled "New England Convention," and having for its subject the above few lines: "Should the Congress possess the spirit and independence enough," etc. It is article No. 1 of a series.

¹⁰⁴ Am. State Papers, vol. 3, p. 549.

end to the only Republic that remains to prove that a Government founded on political equality cannot exist in a season of trial and difficulty, or is calculated to insure either security or happiness to a people."¹⁰⁶

Again on April 13, he reports much fear as existing among men of talents and property that an alliance with France and a war with Great Britain is intended by the Administration. "I am convinced," he says, "that in such a measure not one of the new England States would be a party to it."¹⁰⁶ And in a final report given after his return to Montreal he makes this interesting observation: "The present hopes of the Federalists are founded on the probability of a war with France; but, at all events, this party is strong and well organized enough to prevent a war with Great Britain." Later in the same report he adds: "It would now be superfluous to trouble Your Excellency with an account of the *nature and extent of the arrangements made by the Federalist party to resist any attempt of the Government unfavorable to Great Britain.*"¹⁰⁷ They were such as do great credit to their ability and principles."¹⁰⁸

It is very significant of the Junto's secrecy that Henry in all of his reports to Craig does not mention a single name, and it certainly is unfortunate not to have one item from those who told Henry about the Federal arrangements to resist the Administration. We cannot doubt, if we give any credit to these reports, that Henry was constantly in communication and consultation with members of the Junto. It cannot be shown that he ever mentioned a single source of information, and yet we cannot believe that he gathered this information from mere observation. He was evidently in touch with the Junto and must certainly have been warned not to divulge the names of his informants.

Soon after Henry's return to Canada he naturally opened communications with the Governor General in regard to a just compensation for his services. Mr. Craig, apparently had not considered paying Henry anything for his services while on this mission, although he said in his first letter that, "Such a service would give him a claim, not only upon the Governor

¹⁰⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 550.

¹⁰⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 551.

¹⁰⁷ The italics are my own.

¹⁰⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 552.

General, but upon his Majesty's Ministry."¹⁰⁹ A correspondence was kept up for some time but to no avail. Henry then went to England to place the matter before the Ministry there. Having arrived he addressed a memorial to Lord Liverpool.¹¹⁰ In this memorial to Liverpool by Henry we get the clearest statement of the plot which was then much in evidence between the English party in the United States and the British Government.

He says: "Soon after the *Chesapeake* affair, when the Governor General of British America had reason to believe that the two countries would be involved in war, and had submitted to His Majesty's Ministers the arrangements of the English party in the United States for an effective resistance to the general Government, which would probably terminate in a separation of the Northern States from the general Government, he applied to the undersigned to undertake a mission to Boston. where the whole concerns of the opposition were managed. The object of the mission was to promote and encourage the Federal party to resist the measures of the general Government, to offer assurances of aid and support from His Majesty's Government of Canada, and to open communication between the leading men engaged in that opposition and the Governor General, upon such a footing as circumstances might suggest;¹¹¹ and, finally, to render the plans then in contemplation subservient to the views of His Majesty's Government."

Failing in England as in Canada, Henry next turns his face toward America, arriving early in the year 1812. Feeling a just sense of anger toward the English Ministry for its treatment of his valuable services he decided to reap a just vengeance upon the English. He, therefore, addressed a letter to Mr. Monroe, Secretary of State, (Feb. 20, 1812) and disclosed the plot of 1809. He transmitted by the same packet the documents and correspondence relating to this important mission in which he was employed. Henry denounced most bitterly the English Ministry and said he hoped that the wound resulting from his exposure would be felt where it was most justly merited—upon Craig.¹¹²

These papers were turned over to President Madison who

¹⁰⁹ Am. State Papers, vol. 3, p. 546.

¹¹⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 533.

¹¹¹ The italics are my own.

¹¹² Am. State Papers, vol. 3, p. 545; Niles' Register, vol. 2, p. 20.

sent them to Congress with a message of March 9, 1812, in which he said: "These documents furnish proof to the plot for resisting the laws, destroying the Union, and forming a political connection between the Eastern States and Great Britain."¹¹³ There was a rumor that Madison had paid Henry \$50,000 for the documents which amount was taken out of the Secret Service fund.¹¹⁴ Nothing can be found in support of this statement, however, and we should not give much credit to it.¹¹⁵

Congress, with its usual willingness to discuss all things, gave this their attention, and a resolution was passed calling for names. But names could not be obtained because Henry had no intention of going before a committee of investigation for he himself was not wholly free from the plot. The matter was then turned over to the Committee of Foreign Relations which was to establish the authenticity of the papers, after which they were to be printed.¹¹⁶ They had no difficulty in establishing the authenticity of the documents, the signatures of Lord Liverpool, Mr. Peel, Sir. James Craig, etc., being recognized as genuine. The committee made a formal report to the House stating the above and lamenting the fact that they were unable to do more. "From the careful concealment, on the part of Henry, of every circumstance which could lead to the punishment of any individuals who were criminally connected with him, your committee cannot go further."

They examined Count Edward de Crillon, a foreigner, who accompanied Henry to this country and reduced his testimony to writing. It corroborates and gives much more information in support of Henry's statement.¹¹⁷

However, as an exposure of Eastern Separatists, by one conversant with their counsels, this correspondence fell short of the effect which might have been anticipated. This is largely due to the fact that Henry mentioned no names and that the letters were not published until three years after the events disclosed in them. The leaders of the party disavowed

¹¹³ *Ibid.*

¹¹⁴ Sullivan's Public Letters, p. 262.

¹¹⁵ Niles' Register, vol. 2, p. 31.

¹¹⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 27-31.

¹¹⁷ Annals of Congress, No. 24, 12th Cong., Part. 2, 1811-1812, pp. 1220-1223; Niles' Register, vol. 2, p. 31.

all connection with the plot, and permitted friends less suspected to answer for them. However this may have been, the Craig instructions to Henry were undoubtedly genuine and the documents show that Henry's reports had been officially transmitted by way of Canada to the British Government.¹¹⁸ Would Craig have taken such a step as this without the knowledge or privity of the British Ministry? It would be absurd to entertain such an idea for a moment. The chain of communication from Pickering to Rose, from Rose to Canning, from Canning to Craig, and From Craig back again to the "Pickering Party."¹¹⁹

In concluding this chapter it is impossible, by any stretch of the imagination, to find grounds to justify the conduct of the "Essex Junto," or New England, during this trying period. We have acknowledged and tried to show that the embargo measures were radical, and in a large sense sectional, for the obvious reason that commerce was centered in the East. Was it true that they believed these acts unconstitutional? Could we not say that it was only a sham to get from under the Virginia rule, as they called it? They believed that this "rule" was necessarily bent upon destroying the very sources of their existence. But was this true? Could it have been that the whole South and West were in favor of a destruction of commerce? We believe that it is in no sense true that the South was hostile to commerce to the extent which these New England people were taught to believe. The intelligent Southerner was in favor of it in every form. The people of the South had no objection to commerce as such; they had a system of reasoning on the subject which was rather abstract; and their opposition to it resulted less from dislike than from a fear that all other objects would be sacrificed to it. To destroy it would have been to strike at the very vitals of the nation. The embargo was not meant to destroy but to preserve commerce. What would have been the result if war had been declared with the Junto in command in New England, and with their arrangements made for restricting the administration, as Henry tells us? It can only be a matter of conjecture and it is fruitless to attempt a discussion of what might have happened. The next chapter will treat the influence of Junto leadership during the War of 1812.

¹¹⁸ *Ibid.*

¹¹⁹ Schouler, vol. 2, p. 348.

CHAPTER V

INTRIGUES DURING THE WAR OF 1812

We noted in the last chapter that Congress in March 1809 raised the embargo as to all other nations except France, Great Britain and their dependencies, and substituted a system of Non-intercourse as to them, which prohibited all voyages to the British or French dominions, and all trade in articles of British or French product or manufacturing; at the same time authorizing the President, in case either of these nations should revoke or modify their edicts and cease to violate our neutral commerce, to restore our trade by Proclamation. This measure was resorted to because, as we have seen, it was feared that the Junto, whose following had become very large, would carry forward their designs at no very distant day. It was, therefore, a question of how to preserve the Union and the Constitution and at the same time maintain our national honor. It was believed to be a question of embargo, internal war, and separation, or some form of legislation which would still the troubled waters at home and merit respect abroad. The passage of this bill marks, therefore, the cessation of Junto hostilities, and we pass over a period of three years (1809-1812) in which there is comparative quiet in the ranks of the Federalists. Only once in that time is there an outbreak of Juntoism. The occasion was an application for statehood made by Louisiana on January 14, 1811, which will be discussed later.

This chapter must deal primarily with the attempts of New England leaders to block the National Administration during the War of 1812. It is but the carrying forward of their plans, as revealed to us by Henry, in case there should be a war declared against Great Britain.

But before we attempt to hinge the actions of the New England Federalist upon Junto influences during this important period of history, it will be necessary to make a few general observations concerning the attitude and sentiments of the New England people.

Perhaps every reader of history is acquainted with the half-hearted support accorded the administration during the War of 1812 by this particular section of the country. Doubtless many are, and always have been accustomed to attribute this miserly support to the apparent destruction of commerce forced upon the people by an erring administration. This idea of an erring and malicious government is exactly what was held up before the people of that section, and with a purpose. There are few, we venture to assert, who have ever tried to analyze the true feelings of this people; and fewer still, who have ever thought of the tremendous force and influence which was brought to bear upon New England's inherently honest and loyal sons in an attempt to tear down the government and build one upon "best liberty," principles and "well born" rule.

When war was declared against Great Britain instead of France, the whole Junto came forward in support of their coveted ally. The Junto was so enraged at this declaration of war that they began immediately to sow seeds of dissension in New England in another vain hope of effecting their design. With the unpopular war as an issue, the Junto was able to work up very early a powerful opposition; and many other active forces were enlisted in supporting the Junto in fomenting an insurrection. For instance we have to encounter in this chapter the preaching of the most enlightened ministers who had become convinced that separation was necessary. There are a larger number of newspapers than before supporting the secession doctrine, and some of the most potent workers are at the head of the state governments.

On the other hand, many prominent men were turning away and denouncing the Junto. We already have noticed the change in Mr. Plumer. And now Samuel Dexter of Boston, formerly a Senator in Congress, and afterwards Secretary of War under John Adams, in a speech at a town meeting in Fanueil Hall, August 6, 1812, denounced the measures of the Junto¹ with great force and earnestness, as leading inevitably to a separation of the states. His convictions had indeed become so strong before the end of the war, that, although he had little sympathy with the Republicans, he suffered himself to be run against Strong, the Junto candidate for Governor. "Why," he said, "they make publications and speeches to prove

¹ Plumer's "Life of Plumer," p. 404; Niles' Register, vol. 6, p. 9.

that we are absolved from allegiance to the National Government and say that a division might be justified. This I cannot reconcile with the duties of American citizenship."

- ✓ The first renewal of Federalist discontent was manifested, as has been said, when a bill for the admission of Louisiana as a state, into the Union, was introduced in Congress on January 14, 1811. This bill gave occasion for a strong expression of feeling by the New England members in Congress. Since they were brought now to confront the new and inevitable expansion of the American Union beyond the Mississippi, their pent-up jealousy broke out again into the greatest anger.

The new census showed a rapid development of population beyond the Alleghanies, where their political camp-fires could never kindle. It seemed to them as if New England's sceptre and commerce were departing together. At this point, therefore, we are again confronted with the antipathy in the East to the growth of the Southwest, to additional representation from the South and to slavery expansion; the origin of which, so far as concern Pickering and Quincy, and the old faction leaders of that section, must be ascribed more to political than humane convictions, however clear might have been the later objections.

Quincy's speech in the House against erecting any state beyond the Mississippi was very violent.³ "If this bill passes," he says, "it is my deliberate opinion, that it is virtually a dissolution of the Union; that it will free the states from their moral obligation; and, as it will then be the right of all, so it will be the duty of some to prepare definitely for a separation,—amicably, if they can, violently, if they must." At that point Poindexter⁴ called Mr. Quincy to order and demanded of the Speaker if, "Amicably, if they can, violently, if they must," was consistent with the propriety of debate.⁵ The Speaker decided that while great latitude was allowed in debate, "Amicably, if they can, violently, if they must," was contrary to the order of debate. His opinion was ruled out by a vote of the House.

Under the leadership of Hillhouse, Dana and Quincy, prodigious but vain efforts were made by the Junto Federalists in

³ Movement to abolish Slavery.

⁴ Annals of Congress, vol. 22, 3d Sess., p. 526; Plumer's "Plumer," p. 385; "Life and Speeches of J. Quincy."

⁵ Delegate in the House from Mississippi Territory.

⁶ Annals of Congress, vol. 22, 3d Sess., pp. 525-526.

Congress to prevent the admission of states erected out of the Louisiana Purchase and without a constitutional amendment.⁸ In regard to the formation of new states, Quincy said: "Sir, the question concerns the proportion of power, reserved by this Constitution, to every state in the Union. Have the three branches of this Government a right at all to weaken and outweigh the influence, respectively secured, to each state, in this compact, by introducing at pleasure, new partners, situated beyond the old limits of the United States?"⁷

Prof. E. S. Corwin said in a recent publication⁸ "The word 'Sovereign' was first used by Calhoun as elevating the people of a state to the highest political entity in the United States."

In Josiah Quincy's speech of January 14, 1811, on the admission of Louisiana into the Union, was made a most extraordinary plea for the political sovereignty of the states.⁹ On page 530, he said: "The term new states in this article¹⁰ intends that New Political Sovereignities be formed within the original limits of the United States; and does not intend new political sovereignties, with territorial annexations, to be erected, without the original limits of the United States." Again on page 535, he said: "The proportion of the political weight of each sovereign state, constituting this Union, depends upon the number of states having a voice under the compact. This number the Constitution permits us to multiply at pleasure within the limits of the present United States but not outside. Now sir, what is this power that we propose to usurp? Nothing less than the power, changing all the proportion of the weight and influence, possessed by the potent sovereignties composing this Union. A stranger to be introduced to an equal share, without their consent. The Constitution never meant that we could add foreign partners to this compact at our irresponsible pleasure."

Mr. Tracy, in the Senate in 1803, gave his reasons why he could not vote for the Louisiana Treaty, and referred to the states as being so many original sovereignties or partners to the compact.¹¹

⁷ Jefferson's first idea, Randolph's "Jefferson," vol. 3, p.

⁸ *Annals of Congress*, vol. 22, 3d Sess., p. 530.

⁹ *Mich. Law of Rev.*, May 1912, p. 534.

¹⁰ *Annals of Cong.*, vol. 22, 3d Sess., pp. 524-542.

¹¹ Article 4, Sec. 3, of the Constitution.

¹² *Annals of Cong.*, vol. 13, 8th Cong., 1st Sess., p. 55.

As regards State Interposition, Pickering said July 8, 1809: "How are the powers of the respective states to be maintained but by individual states putting their negative on the usurpations of the general government?"¹² The newspapers of New England, during the years 1808-1809, and 1811-1814, are full of such sentiments.¹³ The Journal of the Hartford Convention in 1814 declares: "That the states not only have the right but it becomes their duty to interpose their authority when infractions of the Constitution endanger their state sovereignty."¹⁴

But returning to the discussion in Congress, we find that the Junto objected to Louisiana's being admitted on account of the French influence which might be manifested in that quarter. To this old and well-worn objection, Poindexter of Mississippi made some lively thrusts. He said:¹⁵ "I admit the existence of French influence there, but I cannot make it a basis on which to justify a refusal to emancipate the great body of people from the trammels of territorial vassalage. Is it a good reason, why the people who reside within the circle of the Essex Junto should not enjoy equal rights with the rest of their fellow citizens, because those who compose that association are avowedly the partisans of England? And I venture to pronounce, sir, that these British attachments, fostered and cherished amidst the wrongs and insults which we have received from that nation, have already produced more mischief to this nation, than the miserable French influence existing in New Orleans would produce in a half century."

In the Senate the aged Pickering, offended those who favored territorial expansion by exposing, in open debate, confidential correspondence relating to West Florida,¹⁶ and was therefore censured by that body¹⁷ although this might have been spared him but for his obstinacy. Pickering was trying to prove that the United States had no claim whatever to Florida between the Mississippi and the Perdido rivers.¹⁸ In support of this

¹² Pickering Mss., January 8, 1809.

¹³ See *Boston Gazette*, the *Statesman*, the *Essex Register*, the *Pittsfield Sun*, and the *Boston Centinel*.

¹⁴ Miles' Register, vol. 7, p. 308.

¹⁵ Annals of Congress, vol. 22, 3d Sess., p. 558.

¹⁶ The papers were letters from Talleyrand to Livingstone, in which the former denied that the United States had acquired, by treaty of 1807, any title to Louisiana east of the Mississippi.

¹⁷ Annals of Congress, vol. 22, 3d Sess., pp. 65-66.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 65.

argument, he read the documents publicly which were intended only for the ears of the members of the Senate. In his last attempt, therefore, he exerted his powers to limit Southern territory and Southern representation.

As we have seen, the Louisiana debate in 1811 was simply a revival of the debate of 1803, when the purchase was made. The grounds for opposition at both times were, in Junto terms, as follows: "If you extend the Southern territory you destroy that balance of power so necessary to our Union. Therefore, we as a New England Junto, do hereby agree to protest against such extension, on every occasion, in token of deepest respect and gratitude to the Fathers who said: "Lest your numbers, be equally balanced, one with another, at all times, ye cannot hope to endure." What the Fathers intended has been a never-dying source of debate for scheming politicians throughout all ages. Their efforts availed nothing in this connection, however, and Louisiana became a state April 8, 1812.

The efforts of the Junto to block the Administration during the War of 1812, being the main topic of this chapter, we regret that it is impossible to take up in more detail the causes which led up to the outbreak. They cover almost the entire period from 1793 to the declaration of war in 1812, and, of course, cannot be discussed here. Many of our grievances, however, have been mentioned in connection with the embargo and other measures of retaliation.

The American nation had despaired of ever being free without war from British impressment and the constant inroads upon our commerce. The British refused to raised the long standing Orders in Council, saying that the Non-intercourse ought to be raised and English commerce put on the same basis as that of France. On the 1st of June, therefore, Mr. Madison transmitted to Congress a correspondence¹⁹ between Mr. Russell, the American Chargé d'affaires at London, and the British Ministry on the subject of the Orders in Council, by which it appeared that the latter inflexibly adhered to their system, and that all hopes of accommodation were at an end. At the same time the President sent the correspondence between Mr. Foster and the Secretary of State on the same subject. Mr. Foster based all of his excuses on the fact that the French decrees had not been repealed, and in this England

¹⁹ Am. State Papers, vol. 3, p. 385.

unfolded her true policy. She declared²⁰ that the Orders in Council should not be repealed until France had revoked all of her internal restrictions on British commerce. It was either tamely surrender our affairs or fight. "Forbearance had indeed ceased to be a virtue."²¹

President Madison's message, which accompanied the documents, referred to above, was referred to the Committee on Foreign Relations. The committee acted promptly and, with an elaborate report of British aggressions upon our neutral commerce, recommended that Great Britain's measures be met by force.²² On June 5, the House of Representatives passed a bill declaring war against Great Britain and her dependencies. It was debated and passed by the Senate and signed by the President June 18, 1812.²³

Many opponents of the Administration contended that Madison became a tool in the hands of the war party in Congress led by Clay. It is urged that this war party conditioned Madison's second nomination upon his British policy, and that to get this favor he was forced to recommend a thirty days' embargo followed by a declaration of war.

There can be no doubt that Clay proposed the embargo which became a ninety days' law instead of a thirty, on April 4, 1812²⁴; but whether it was intended as a direct preliminary to war or whether it was a last effort at peaceful negotiation, matters little to us. It is sufficient that war was declared and that the causes justified the measure. Madison says that the embargo was a means rather of negotiation than a preliminary to war.²⁵

✓ Immediately after the passage of the bill, the minority party in Congress published an address to their constituents, assign-

²⁰ Madison Works, vol. 9, p. 272.

²¹ See Am. State Papers, vol. 3, pp. 405-629, for the diplomatic correspondence; Niles' Register, vol. 2, has many of the important reports, including the report of the committee on foreign affairs which enumerates British aggressions; Perkins' "Late War," gives the British and French decrees in their order, pp. 1-48; and the Annals of Congress, vols. 23 and 24, give the entire discussion and the war documents.

²² Am. State Papers, vol. 3, p. 405.

²³ Annals of Congress, vol. 23, p. 265; Niles' Register, vol. 2, pp. 272-273.

²⁴ Annals of Congress, vol. 23, 3d Sess., p. 187; Monroe's correspondence, March 15, 1812.

²⁵ Madison's writings, vol. 8, April 24, 1812.

ing their reasons for not supporting the measure.²⁶ In their opinion, a war with England would necessarily lead to a connection and alliance with France, hazardous to the liberties of the United States. If war, at all, were necessary, it ought to be with France as being first and greater in her aggressions. They would suffer American merchant men to arm in their own defense, and pursue such courses of trade as their judgment should direct. They considered the attempt to conquer Canada as unjust and impolitic and promising no good results. The minority protest from Congress served as a platform for a national "Peace Party."²⁷ This party comprised nearly the whole of the Federalists throughout the Union. Upon such a platform the "friends of peace, liberty, and commerce," as they styled themselves, began to organize for the Presidential campaign.

Meanwhile, the New England coterie set their faces like flint against active preparations. They obstructed the national recruitment and subscriptions to the national loan. One after another of the New England State legislatures protested against the war with Great Britain, and called upon the people to vote down the men responsible for it. Quincy presented a protest from Massachusetts; Chittenden followed with one from Vermont,²⁸ and Connecticut furnished a proclamation from her Governor Griswold.²⁹ The Administration could very well evade resolutions so long as they were allowed to remain mere resolutions; but this could not be for long, because New England's Governors were nearly all members of the Junto and were not afraid to act.³⁰ The Administration, therefore, was yet to receive its hardest blows.

Four days after the declaration of war, Governor Strong received a requisition from General Dearborn³¹ to order into the services of the United States forty-one companies of militia

²⁶ Annals of Congress, vol. 24, part 2, June 1812. Composed largely of New England Congressmen.

²⁷ Schouler, vol. 2, p. 355; M. Carey's Olive Branch, p. 225.

²⁸ Annals of Congress, vol. 23, 3d Sess., p. 1480.

²⁹ Niles' Register, vol. 2, p. 389.

³⁰ The recent elections had given as Governors: Strong, to Massachusetts; Griswold, to Connecticut; Jones, to Rhode Island; Galusha, to Vermont; and Plumer, a converted Junto member, to New Hampshire. Galusha was defeated by Chittenden at the beginning of 1813.

³¹ Senior Major-Gen. in Army of U. S.

for the defense of the ports and harbors of Massachusetts and the harbor of Newport, Rhode Island. The Governor, with the advice of the council, refused to comply with this requisition and communicated his views upon the subject to the executives of Connecticut and Rhode Island.³² In support of his opinions the Governor remarked that the President had authority to call the militia into actual service, but that there being no immediate danger of invasion either in Massachusetts or Rhode Island, the President was over-stepping his power, that the State Governor should judge for himself when the militia should go out, and that they could not be lawfully commanded by any officer, outside of the militia, except it be the President of the United States. Connecticut and Rhode Island refused their quota of militia on exactly the same ground.

The Constitution of Massachusetts authorized the executive to require the opinion of the judges of the supreme court upon any important legal or constitutional question. On this occasion, therefore, Governor Strong submitted the following questions for judicial decision.³³ Whether the exigencies contemplated by the Constitution for placing the militia at the service of the United States were not questions to be decided by the several states? 2. Whether, when any of the exigencies occur authorizing the employment of the militia in the service of the United States, they can lawfully be commanded by any officer outside of the militia except the President of the United States? In answer to these questions, Judges Parsons, Sewal, and Parker, state³⁴: "After reciting the clause in the Constitution relating to the subject, we find that no power is given either to the President or to Congress to determine that either of the exigencies does in fact exist; as this power is not delegated to the United States by the Constitution, nor prohibited to the states, it is reserved to the states respectively, and must be exercised by those whom the states have intrusted the chief command of the militia." To the second question, they say: "We know of no constitutional provision authorizing any officer of the Army of the United States to command the militia, or any officer of the militia to command the Army of the United States.

³² Niles' Register, vol. 2, p. 388; Perkins' "Late War," p. 63.

³³ *Ibid.*, vol. 3, p. 117. Strong's speech to Legislature.

³⁴ Decision in full in "Political Tracts," 1805-1812, Harvard Library; Plumer's "Life of Plumer," p. 399; Perkins' "Late War," p. 64.

Congress may provide laws for the government of the militia when in the actual service, but to extend this power to the placing them under command of an officer not of the militia, except the President, would render nugatory the provisions of the Constitution, that the militia are to have officers appointed by the states."

The constitutional questions on the subject of the militia, now brought into view and at issue between the general government and the States of Massachusetts, Connecticut, and Rhode Island, were of vital importance. Without an efficient army, the safety of the nation rested at this period on the militia. If they were to be considered as eighteen distinct and independent bodies of troops, acting without concert, and subject to being called into service only when the executives of the several states deemed it necessary, and not subject to the direction of any one head, it was evident that they could be of little use in defending the country. Who knew this better than the Junto? What bodies of men ever received a judicial decision more in keeping with its desires than the above? It is impossible to imagine a decision more nearly in keeping with Juntoism than this, because their purpose was to block the Administration in prosecuting the war.

"The power," says Monroe, "which is given Congress by the people of the United States to provide for the calling forth the militia for the purpose specified in the Constitution, is unconditional. It is a complete power vested in the National Government, extending to all those purposes. If it were dependent upon the assent of the executives of the individual states, it might be entirely frustrated at any time, and we could not depend upon the militia for public defense." The decision advanced by the three judges of Massachusetts on the other hand, that the regular troops and the militia were to be considered as independent allied bodies, when not directly under the command of the President himself, pushed the doctrine of "States Rights" further than it had ever been carried before.

The burden of the Junto's petitions to Congress was: "An alliance with England must be our salvation; war must be our eternal ruin." Madison may have been duped into war, but the provocation was strong, and war or dishonorable submission was the only alternative which England had left us. There is no evidence that Napoleon was in touch with Madison or that

he influenced the administration in any way. Peace and neutral commerce every one desired, but they could not be had together. Nor could there be a war for maritime and neutral rights without involving, also, offensive warfare.

The national election of 1812 is of peculiar interest to our narrative, because there was another very decided attempt at a national nominating convention by the Junto, or peace Federalists. They were again face to face with the proposition of defeating Republican candidates. In pursuance of the regular custom, the Republican members of Congress assembled in caucus in the senate chamber and nominated James Madison for the office of President and John Langdon of New Hampshire, for the office of Vice-President, May 8, 1812.⁸⁵ but Mr. Langdon, who was seventy-one years of age, refused the nomination.⁸⁶ Therefore, at a later caucus, Elbridge Gerry of Massachusetts, was regularly nominated for the office of Vice-President.⁸⁷

Mr. Madison's war policy had made him unpopular with a small portion of the Republican party in New York. This dissenting faction determined to defeat Madison, and to this end nominated through caucus DeWitt Clinton. The Federalists hoped that Madison had become sufficiently unpopular by the war measures to lose the nomination; but, as he had not, they were again at a loss to know what to do. DeWitt Clinton was then a person of some distinction in the State of New York. He had expressed his detestation of mobocracy, and had been reprimanded for it. Although he had been ranked with the Jeffersonian school, yet, as he had indicated dissatisfaction with the policy of Mr. Madison, it was hoped, not only by the nominating faction but by the Federalists, that he might be elected. As a matter of fact, any man that could have been elected would have been preferred to Madison by the Federalists, and this party was willing to combine with any portion of the citizens who were willing to withdraw from the support of that gentleman. Measures were taken, therefore, to effect a union of these two dissatisfied forces by calling a conference in New York in the month of September, 1812.

The Democratic convention which met in Baltimore in 1831

⁸⁵ Niles' Register, vol. 2, p. 192.

⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 276.

⁸⁷ *Ibid.*

has always stood as the first National Nominating Convention. Few writers, therefore, have ever mentioned the secret attempt at a National Convention of 1808 and the one of 1812. The latter is simply a duplicate of the 1808 convention which we have already discussed, and will not be treated in detail. Those who have mentioned the Convention of 1812 at all have called it the first Secret Nominating Convention and not the second. Viewed with relation to practical results, both were of slight consequence, and perhaps for this reason they have been neglected; but as steps in the development of the present method of nominating candidates for the presidency, these Federalist conferences of 1808 and 1812 are of much importance. They are important to this work because both are undoubtedly products of Juntoism. So far as is known, no report of the proceedings of the 1812 Convention was ever published, and the newspapers of the period contain very little trustworthy information regarding it. The conference was conducted as privately as possible, so what little information the papers contain is more or less conjectural. We must again, therefore, depend upon a few letters as our sources.

Mr. Sullivan, one of the delegates, gives the following brief account of its origin⁸⁸: "Soon after the war had been declared I chanced to be at Saratoga Springs, where I met with the Hon. Calvin Goddard, of Norwich, Connecticut, and with the Hon. John Dwight of Springfield, Massachusetts, Governor Griswold, of Connecticut, was also at the hotel, but confined to his chamber. It was the habit of these two gentlemen and myself, to pay the Governor a daily visit; and when he announced himself too ill to receive us, we strolled into the neighboring woods to talk over the state of the Union, respecting the welfare and durability of which we entertained serious and painful fears."

"On one of these excursions, it was concluded, that a *Convention* should be convened at New York during the following September, at which as many states should be represented as could be induced to send delegates. The object of the convention was to determine upon the expediency of defeating Mr. Madison's re-election, by running DeWitt Clinton as the opposing candidate for the Presidency. Goddard was intrusted

⁸⁸ J. T. Sullivan's "Public Men of the Revolution," p. 350; *Am. Hist. Rev.*, vol. 1, p. 680.

with the State of Connecticut; Dwight with New York, and I was to awaken Massachusetts to the importance of this Convention; while all three were to assist in arousing the States."

They met privately, and behind closed doors, Sept. 15, 1812, and consumed three days in eager debate.³⁹ The Convention, during two days, had been unable to come to any determination. Rufus King,⁴⁰ who had been persuaded⁴¹ to attend, eagerly opposed the adoption of Clinton as their candidate, denouncing him as a mere ambitious demagogue, a second Aaron Burr.⁴² King said further: "As evidence of the course he would be likely to follow, we should remember that he disapproved the embargo, then receded from his position, and in a speech made in the Senate of New York, which he published, restored himself to the confidence of the Democrats by a triade of abuse poured out upon the Federalists. If we succeed in promoting his election we might place in the chair a Caesar Borgia instead of a James Madison."⁴³ These invectives against Clinton threw the Convention into still greater confusion and it was about to be adjourned when H. G. Otis, by a rather clever speech,⁴⁴ succeeded in restoring order and it was agreed to support DeWitt Clinton for President. Jared Ingersoll, of Pennsylvania, was selected for Vice-President. Henry Adams says: "No one knew what pledges had been given by Clinton in the bargain for the electoral votes, but no man of common sense who wished to preserve the Government and the Union could longer refuse to vote for Madison."⁴⁵

At the Convention in question eleven states were represented by seventy delegates. Vermont sent two delegates, New Hampshire two, Massachusetts eight, Rhode Island three, New York eighteen, Connecticut six, New Jersey twelve, Pennsylvania twelve, Delaware two, Maryland three, and South Carolina

³⁹ *Ibid.*, Hildreth, "U. S. Hist.," vol. 6. p. 376.

⁴⁰ King always stood with Hamilton against going to the point of secession, and this meeting he considered dangerous.

⁴¹ King's "Rufus King," vol. 5, p. 276. Letter from Radcliff to King.

⁴² *Ibid.*, King to Gore, p. 377; Hildreth, vol. 6. p. 376.

⁴³ See King's Papers, in *Life and Letters*, vol. 5, p. 281; see pp. 275-284, same reference, for King's account of the resolutions and position taken by the Convention.

⁴⁴ Sullivan's "Public Men," p. 351.

⁴⁵ H. Adams' "Hist. of U. S.," vol. 6, p. 410. Mr. Adams characterizes the canvass in New York as being most discreditable.

four. We see that nearly every state in which the Federalists were strong enough to make their vote a counting factor in the election sent delegates, and all were asked to send them. So far as the party was concerned, therefore, we may be safe in saying that they had a national representation. We do not know how the delegates were chosen, because the records are too incomplete to admit of the assertion that they were duly elected. They doubtless used the same method as that employed in 1808.

The analogy between this Conference and the present national nominating convention is practically complete. Delegates of a distinct political party met for the purpose of nominating a candidate for the Presidency. They nominated such a candidate; their party conducted a "Campaign" in his behalf and cast their votes for him. The facts in the case, then, would seem to warrant the assertion that the Conventions of 1808 and 1812 were near approaches to, if not the strictest sense, National Conventions. The result is well known. Mr. Madison was elected and the Junto lost its last chance of capturing the Presidency.

It has been shown how upon the first note of war, New England majorities reverted to the old leaders, under whose inspiration the legislatures of Massachusetts, Connecticut, and Rhode Island asserted States Rights, and discountenanced all war measures against Great Britain not purely defensive, while the Governors refused to march the quota of militia to the defense of ports or place them under the orders of the War Department. We shall now go on to discuss other measures of Junto opposition.

The plan of military operations at the commencement of the war, on the part of the United States, was to garrison and defend the seaboard principally by occasional calls on the neighboring militia, aided by a few regulars, the whole to be under the command of generals from the regular army. With the remaining regular forces, together with such volunteers as could be procured, they were to attack the British posts in Upper Canada, and subdue them. The War Department believed that could be accomplished before England would have time to place an effective army there and it would give the United States a great advantage.⁴⁶ Here, however, they struck

⁴⁶ Writings of James Madison, vol. 8, p. 262.

the full force of Junto opposition because it was offensive warfare and leveled against their beloved England. They would, in some measure, assist in the defense but used their choicest language against all offensive movements.

In a document ⁴⁷ entitled: "The Creed of Federal Editors," one can find such sentiments as these: "We cannot, and we will not rejoice in any event of victory which tends solely to prosper the unjust and wicked views of our Cabinet in producing an offensive war, at once disgraceful, unnatural, and every way disastrous."

"It is disgraceful because there is no longer a doubt, since the development of the juggling arts of Bassano and Russell, that it was produced either by wicked intrigues, the baleful influence, or the menaces of the French Tyrant. It is unnatural, because it was declared for the sole purpose of invading the Canadian provinces. It is unnatural, because it has rent asunder, perhaps forever, nations of the same language, laws and religion; nations which should be united in a holy league to defend law, liberty, and religion against the most dangerous tyrant who was ever permitted to scourge the earth."

Routed at the polls in 1812 as a national party, the peace men who had fallen in with the Junto and had supported DeWitt Clinton against Madison, began to disband; for the electoral vote and the Congressional returns showed that the war had been sustained and that it must go on. But the inflexible rulers of the Eastern States were not to be thus turned back. National reverses seem to have bound this type of men more closely to one another. Except for Gore and the over-aggressive Pickering who were serving in Congress, all the other great statesmen of the Junto school, Quincy, Lloyd, Otis, Strong, Chittenden, Hillhouse, J. C. Smith, and others, were shedding their combined light upon local politics. Some of these leaders, like Pickering, continued to blaspheme the Administration; others like Otis were more tolerant; but all agreed that the New England States, even though left alone, must look to Federalism as their last hope in the approaching shipwreck. Practically all of the other peace states had rallied to the Union cause. New York, Pennsylvania, New Jersey, and Maryland now gave the Administration a firm support.

In New England, on the other hand, the peace party gained

⁴⁷ *The Examiner*, p. 127.

in strength as the war progressed. In the spring elections of 1813, Strong was elected Governor of Massachusetts with a Federal legislature, J. C. Smith became Connecticut's chief executive succeeding the late Griswold.⁴⁸ Chittenden of Vermont, who, in default of a popular choice, was made Governor by a joint ballot of the legislature, defeated Galusha; and Giliam, of the same Junto School, supplanted Plumer a Governor of New Hampshire, thus delivering into the hands of the Junto leaders the supreme control of the state governments. Governor Plumer's defeat was a hard blow to the Administration, because he was a firm supporter and the first New England Governor to promptly send militia at the call of the President in 1812.⁴⁹ He gives the following account of his defeat: "No part," he says March 9, 1813, "of my official conduct has been condemned but that of ordering out the detached militia in 1812 when requested by the President. The great accusation is, that I support the war and vindicate the National Government."⁵⁰

It is a curious fact, overlooked at the time by both parties to the controversy, that the Legislature of New Hampshire, in June, 1794, by a resolution still in force, had authorized the Governor to call out the militia whenever required by the President.⁵¹

Chittenden, as soon as he took the oath of office, assumed command of the State Militia, and recalled a small Vermont brigade, detailed by his predecessor for garrison duty at Burlington, while critical operations were in progress at that point. This action by Chittenden was rebuked by distant states as treasonable, and a war member of the House of Representatives at Washington proposed to have him prosecuted.⁵² But Otis having laid on the table of the Massachusetts Senate a resolution expressive of the duty and readiness of Massachusetts to aid, with her whole power, the Governor of Vermont, the matter was dropped.⁵³

⁴⁸ Griswold had died in office.

⁴⁹ Niles' Register, vol. 2, p. 273; speech to Legislature on the declaration of war.

⁵⁰ Plumer's "Plumer," pp. 408-414.

⁵¹ *Ibid.*, p. 389.

⁵² Niles' Register, vol. 5, p. 423; Hildreth, vol. 3, p. 465; Schouler, vol. 2, p. 421.

⁵³ Hildreth, vol. 3, p. 465.

Throughout the year 1813, the success of the American arms lay principally in the daring and splendid work of her small navy which operated in and about the New England harbors. The old British faction, the Essex Junto or the New England peace party, ever watchful of British interests, seems to have grown quite despondent over the defeats of the British navy. They attempted to aid Great Britain, therefore, in destroying American war vessels and won another, and even more odious, title—"Blue light Federalists."

One incident occurred in New London harbor at the time Hardy's blockading squadron hemmed in the United States frigates. Stephen Decatur commanding the United States squadron addressed the following letter⁵⁴ to the Secretary of the Navy, December 20, 1812: "Some few nights since, the weather promised an opportunity for this squadron to get to sea, and it was said that on that night we intended to make the attempt. In the course of the evening two blue lights were burnt on both the points at the harbor's mouth as signals to the enemy, and there is not a doubt, but that they have, by signals and otherwise, instantaneous information of our movements. Great but unsuccessful exertions have been made to detect those who communicate with the enemy by signal. Notwithstanding, these signals have been repeated, and have been seen by twenty persons, at least, in this squadron. There are men in New London who have the hardihood to affect to disbelieve it, and the affrontery to avow their belief."

As illustrative of the feeling which the "blue lights" provoked we will quote from several newspapers. The *Rhode Island American* has this to say:⁵⁵ "The infamous 'blue light' incident has been lustily denied by many; for it is feared the honest part of the community may reflect on the circumstance, and in it discover that wicked 'British influence' that prevails in certain parts of the United States."⁵⁶ The *Baltimore Federal Gazette* says: "It is astonishing to observe the efforts made to invalidate the truth of the report respecting the 'blue light' exhibition on the shores of New London. With impudence unparalleled the facts are denied *in toto*, and the thing is twisted

⁵⁴ Niles' Register, vol. 5, p. 302.

⁵⁵ Copied in Niles' Register, vol. 5, p. 302.

⁵⁶ See also Annals of Cong., No. 25, vol I, House debate on the "Blue Lights" affair.

and turned a thousand ways to weaken its force ; for the people are alarmed and shocked at the vileness, and begin to see the lengths, to which the attachment of some to the enemy, will lead them.”⁵⁷ No positive evidence has ever been found connecting this affair with the British faction. Congress concluded the matter too trivial for investigation ; but public suspicion, long directed against the “peace men” of New England, did them ample mischief in the epithet of “Blue light Federalists.” Conclusions may be drawn, however, from what has gone before and from that which is to come.

We said at the beginning of this chapter that New England’s political bosses were responsible for the half hearted support given the Administration during the war. We said, too, that Juntoism had been breathed into the nostrils of writers (editors and others, and that even the most learned ministers caught the spirit and showered invectives upon the administration at Washington and plead with their people to, “Come out from among them.” During the last year of the War they based their complaints upon three subjects. 1. That England has always been willing to make a treaty with us on fair and honorable grounds. 2. That the war was offensive and morally wrong. 3. That since our Administration was so obstinately bent on continuing the war no prospect of peace could exist as long as the Government had means of carrying it on. As to the first subject, we cannot say that it was reserved for the last year of the war, in fact none of them were entirely reserved for the second year, but greater effort was manifested at this period to make them felt. The first subject was the text, as we have seen, of Pickering’s denunciation of the Administration in 1808. In that letter he went so far as to accuse the President of withholding documents which would have established the innocence of England to the satisfaction of all.⁵⁸ It was used by Quincy and others in Congress to show that war was unnecessary and that if England’s advances had been met promptly and fairly, peace could have been assured.⁵⁹ The Junto claimed that our Ministers were instructed in such a way that no nation could treat with them. This, of course, refers to our demand for a treaty on the impressment issue.

⁵⁷ Copied in Niles’ Register, vol. 5, p. 311.

⁵⁸ “Political Tracts,” 1908.

⁵⁹ Edmund Quincy’s “Life and Speeches of Josiah Quinn.”

The second subject, which is concerned with the morality of the cause, must, in all justice, be entrusted to the New England clergy. Governor Plumer, having been defeated in the spring election of 1813, as Governor of New Hampshire, was removed from the scenes of public life. He had been deeply moved by the false and wicked accusations which the sermons of Osgood, Parish, and Gardiner contained. Therefore, he published a series of essays⁸⁰ during the winter of 1813-14 entitled: "*An address to the Clergy of New England on their opposition to the rulers of the United States, by a Layman.*" He quoted the text of Malachi: "Ye have departed out of the way, ye have caused many to stumble; therefore have I made you contemptible and base before all the people." Plumer's addresses were, in large part, quotations from the sermons and their analysis. Beside the newspaper circulation, about three thousand copies of it were circulated in pamphlet form. It proved to be a great and wholesome publication in favor of the Administration in its attempt to counteract the baleful influence.

A few quotations⁸¹ will suffice to show how the Clergy took up, to old Junto songs at this juncture, and chanted them from the pulpits. Dr. Osgood in a sermon of June, 1812, says: "Our government has the hardihood and affrontery at which Demons might blush. This war is an outrage against Heaven, against all truth, honesty, justice, goodness,—against all principles of social happiness." In another sermon of a few days later, he says: "Were not the authors of this war in character nearly akin to the Deists and Atheists of France; were they not men of hardened hearts, sacred consciences, reprobate minds and desperate wickedness; it seems utterly inconceivable that they should have made a declaration of war." Shortly after this exposition we find him warning his people as follows: "Every man who volunteers his services in such a war against Great Britain or loans his money for its support, or by his conversation, his writings or any other mode of influence, encourages its prosecution, that man is an accomplice in the wickedness; leads his conscience with the blackest crimes, brings the guilt

⁸⁰ The pamphlet containing these addresses can be found in Harvard library.

⁸¹ All of these quotations are taken from Plumer's addresses. He quotes them directly from the sermons. See Carney's "Olive Branch" for parts of many of these sermons.

of blood upon his soul, and in sight of God and His law is a murderer—and no murderer hath eternal life.” How variant are such wanton charges from the spirit of that mild religion, which enjoins on its disciples, to let their moderation to be known to all men, and not to judge others.

Dr. Parish in a sermon of April 8, 1813, compares the President to the Devil, and says Congress has established iniquity and murder by law. He represents our rulers as the abject slaves of the French Emperor, and all our calamities as rising from the friendship of our government to that haughty master. July 12, 1812, he tells us: “The wicked archives of all the wicked governments from Macedonia’s madman to the Swede, furnish no parallel to this profligate measure. The story of Herod destroying all the babes of Bethlehem, will give place to this more enormous iniquity.” In a later sermon, he endeavors to excite the people of the Eastern States to rebel, to dissolve the Federal government and dismember the Union. “The general government,” he says, “cannot provide any reasonable defense. They cannot raise men; they cannot borrow money.” He tells them further that they have thrown away a sufficient number of petitions and remonstrances by sending them to the Potomac to form carpets for her palaces. Then followed these questions: “Will you then throw yourselves completely in their power, by suffering this warfare to proceed? Will you admit Southern troops into your borders?” This is a fair sample of the Massachusetts pulpit during the war. It is simply Juntism as it had been proclaimed from the year 1800. J. Q. Adams wrote to Mr. Plumer January 10, 1813, saying: “The clergy of this country are growing more and more like the clergy of all other countries. Osgood, Parish and Gardiner, are but minatures of Lowth, Sacheverel, Laud and Lorain; and in that rank I leave them.”⁶²

When we consider the third subject, “The Government cannot carry on war without money and as long as they have it this blood shedding will never cease,” it becomes necessary to uncover one of the darkest and most treasonable of the Junt plots. From the beginning of the war, as we have seen, the Peace Faction, as they called themselves, had exerted every influence and effort to thwart the government in its effort to provide means for maintaining the war against Great Britain.

* Plumer’s “Life of Plumer,” p. 103.

We have seen how at the beginning they attempted to block the raising of an army; how they refused to send out the State Militia; and how they chose to interpret the Constitution to meet their own wishes and desires. It now remains for us to see how they acted in regard to financing the war. Boston was to be the grand focus of this conspiracy.

It must be remembered that the embargo had closed all American ports to the legal admission of foreign goods. It must be remembered that the officers were not very zealous in the maintenance of the restrictive laws. Smuggling, therefore, became almost respectable and, owing to New England's capital, was extensively carried on. This illegal trade was kept up, and during the war many valuable British prizes⁶³ were taken into Boston ports.⁶⁴ Boston, therefore, became a distributing center for foreign goods to other cities. For these goods they paid partly in bills of the banks of the Middle and Southern states and partly in their own promissory notes.⁶⁵ Boston by this means became a financial autocrat, having in its hands despotic power to control the money affairs of the country. This fact suggested to the leaders of the Peace Faction in New England a scheme for blocking the Administration financially and thereby compelling it to abandon with dishonor⁶⁶ the struggle with Great Britain. Nor were they slow to act upon the suggestion and to put the scheme into operation.

From the beginning of the war the government was compelled to ask for loans, and the Peace Faction made such persistent opposition for the purpose of embarrassing the government, that in every case a bonus⁶⁷ was paid for all sums borrowed.⁶⁸ In March, 1814, a loan of \$25,000,000 was authorized. Only \$11,400,000 of the proposed loans were raised and that by paying a bonus of \$2,852,000.⁶⁹ It was so dis-

⁶³ Carey's "Olive Branch," p. 286.

⁶⁴ Harrison Gray Otis, charged the Administration with the authorship of this depredation of morals and execrable course of smuggling and fraud.

⁶⁵ Lossing's "War 1812," p. 1008.

⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, Carey's "Olive Branch," p. 286; Schouler, vol. 2, p. 415; Pickering Mss. February 4, 1814, letter to Putnam; Lodge's "Cabot," p. 530.

⁶⁷ Niles' Register, vol. 2, pp. 91 and 195.

⁶⁸ Lossing's "War," p. 1008.

⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 1009.

astrous that only one more attempt was made after that time to borrow money. This was the darkest period of the war, and then it was that the Peace Faction at political meetings, through the press, and from the pulpit, put every obstacle in the way to crush the government. By inflammatory and threatening publications and personal menaces, they intimidated many capitalists.⁷⁰

Of a species of denunciation held out to deter men from subscribing, some idea may be formed from the following references taken from various Boston papers and other publications at this time. Mr. John Lowell⁷¹ in "Road to Ruin" No. 5, says: "Will Federalists subscribe to the loan? Will they lend money to our national rulers? It is impossible; first, because of principle; secondly, because of principle and interest. If they lend money now they make themselves parties to the violation of the Constitution, the cruelly oppressive measures in relation to commerce, and to all the crimes which have occurred in the field and in the cabinet." ("Road to Ruin" No. 5).. He continues: "To what purpose have the Federalists exerted themselves to show the wickedness of this war, and to show the authors of it not only to be unworthy of public confidence but highly criminal, and to arouse public sentiment against it, if now they contribute money without which these rulers must be compelled to stop?" (The same reference continued): "By the magnanimous course pointed out by Governor Strong, that is, by withholding all voluntary aid in prosecuting the war, the manfully expressing our opinions as to its injustice and ruinous tendency, we have arrested its progress; and driven its authors to abandon their nefarious schemes, and to look anxiously for peace. What then if we lend them money? They will not make peace; they will hanker after Canada. Pray do not prevent them, the abusers of their trust, from becoming bankrupt; do not prevent them from becoming odious to the public and replaced by better men. Any Federalist who lends

⁷⁰ One of the best examples of New England literature on the subject is the *Examiner*. It contains fifteen articles entitled, "Road to Ruin," by John Lowell. There are many political essays and official documents which could be cited, but we will quote largely from "Road to Ruin" and indicate by numbers, as the articles are numbered from 1 to 15. Cary, in his "Olive Branch" quotes correctly from the *Examiner* and also from newspapers on this phrase of our subject.

⁷¹ Both Lowell's were loyal Junto supporters.

money to the government, must go shake hands with James Madison and claim fellowship with Felix Grundy. Let him no more call himself a Federalist and a friend of his country. He will be called by others infamous." "But Federalists will not lend money because they will never get it again. How, where and when will the government get money to pay interest? There are two very strong reasons, therefore, why Federalists will not lend money—first, because it would be a base abandonment of political and moral principles; secondly, because it is pretty certain that they will never be paid back the amount." The *Boston Centinel*, March 24, 1813, says: "The war advocates appear very sore and chagrined at the failure of the late loan, and in their ravings ascribe the meager subscriptions to the truths which have appeared in the Federal papers on the subject." In a discourse delivered at Byfield, April 7, 1814, by Elijah Parish, D.D. we find the following: "No peace will ever be made, till the people say that there shall be no war. If the rich men continue to furnish money war will continue until the mountains are melted with blood—till every field in America is white with the bones of her people."⁷²

The Junto seems to have extracted promises from many of the wealthier citizens not to lend money to the government; and the fact that they loaned their money secretly, would suggest that they were liable to some sort of disgrace or persecution. To quote John Lowell again in "Road to Ruin," No. 5: "Money is such a drug that men against their consciences, their honor, their duty, their professions and promises—are willing to lend it secretly to support the very measures intended and calculated to ruin them." What, alas, must be the awful state of society and the tremendous pressure brought to bear, when a free citizen is afraid to lend his money publicly to support the government trying to protect him! And to be forced to suffer such abuse as the above from Mr. Lowell, when he rallies secretly to its support, certainly signifies the depths to which patriotism can be dragged.

Records exist to prove these not false accusations. The following is taken from the *Boston Chronicle*, April 14, 1814, and signed by Gilbert and Dean, Brokers. Exchange Coffee House, Boston, April 12": "From the advice of several friends, we are induced to announce to the public that subscriptions to

⁷² Carey's "Olive Branch," p. 292.

the new loan will be received by us as agents. . . . Applications will be received from any persons who wish to receive their interest in Boston, . . . and the names of all subscribers shall be known only to the undersigned."

These extracts give but a faint idea of the violence of the publishers, at this time, by the peace faction. We cannot wonder at the people becoming intimidated and hiding their money in stockings beneath hearthstones, and in various other places to prevent its getting into the clutches of Madison and his cohorts.

Nor was this all. To make the blow still more effectual the conspirators made arrangements⁷⁴ with agents of the government authorities of Lower Canada whereby a very large amount of British Government bills, drawn on Quebec, were transmitted to New York, Philadelphia and Baltimore, and offered on such advantageous terms to capitalists as induced them to purchase.⁷⁴ By this means an immense amount of gold was transmitted to Canada, placed beyond the reach of the Government of the United States, and put into the hands of the enemy, to give succor to the British who were waging war against the independence of the Republic.

These machinations failed to produce the desired effect. There were loyal men in New England, as we have seen, who still subscribed to the loans. The Middle and Southern State banks, with such outside help, were able to keep the government going. So these "Wise men from the East" adopted more strenuous measures to drain those banks of their specie, and render them unable to meet their subscriptions to the loan. The Boston banks fell into this scheme; otherwise it could not have been effected.⁷⁵ The notes of the banks in New York, and of the banks further south, held by these Boston banks,

⁷³ Lossing's "War," p. 1010; Carey's "Olive Branch," p. 301; Schouler, vol. 2, p. 415.

⁷⁴ *Boston Daily Advertiser*, Dec. 16, 1814. These transaction were made so boldly that the bills were advertised in the Boston papers. I annex the following:

"1 bill for.....L. 800	British Government Bills,
1 ditto..... 250	For sale by
1 ditto..... 203	Chas. W. Green,
	No. 14 India wharf."

1,253

⁷⁵ Lossing's "War of 1812," p. 1009; Schouler, vol. 2, pp. 415-416.

were transmitted to them with demands for specie. At the same time drafts were drawn on the New York banks for the balance due the Boston corporations to the amount of about \$8,000,000 in the course of a few months. This of course caused the New York banks to draw heavily on those of Philadelphia and of the South and caused a panic. Statistics show⁷⁶ that the Boston banks which had taken the action had \$250 in specie for every \$100 of their notes in circulation—"a state of things," says Carey, "probably unparalleled in the history of banking from the days of the Lombards to the present day."⁷⁷

The extensive smuggling, the forced sale of British Government bills,⁷⁸ and the later demands of the New England banks upon the weaker ones caused all of the banks of New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, the District of Columbia, Maryland, Virginia, Kentucky and Ohio, to refuse payments in specie.⁷⁹ Some of the banks farther south were aided by some prizes and were not forced into such straits.⁸⁰ As direct evidence to this fact we have a report⁸¹ addressed and signed by the presidents of the six Banks of Philadelphia which says: "*We are forced to suspend specie payment on account of the payment in specie for smuggled goods and the trade in British government bills which have caused very great sums to be exported from the United States.*" As further testimony we have a letter from Mr. Gallatin, Secretary of the Treasury saying: "Not only did New England lend no aid to the Treasury, but her whole influence was thrown to embarrass it. Of loans to the amount of \$41,000,000 paid into the treasury during the war, she contributed less than three millions. This was not all. A large importation of foreign goods into the Eastern States, and an extensive trade in British Government bills of exchange, caused a drain of specie through New England to Great Britain. The specie in the vaults of Massachusetts banks rose from \$1,700,000 in June 1811, to \$3,900,000 in June 1812, and to \$7,300,000 in June 1814, all of which was lost to

⁷⁶ Henry Adams' "Life of Albert Gallatin," pp. 473-474; Carey's "Olive Branch," p. 299; Lossing's "War," p. 1010.

⁷⁷ Carey's "Olive Branch," p. 300.

⁷⁸ Niles' Register, vol. 7, sup. p. 175; Schouler, vol. 2, p. 415.

⁷⁹ Niles' Register, vol. 7, sup. p. 175.

⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 176.

⁸¹ *Ibid.*, Full report published and signed by the six bank Presidents.

the Government and the Treasury."⁸² Disaffection, therefore, withheld a greater part of the capital and so forced the government to negotiate a foreign loan to support a very just war.⁸³

The facts concerning the attitude of the "Essex Junto," the "British faction," the "Peace Party" or the "Blue-light Federalists," during the War of 1812 seem sufficient to warrant the assumption made at the beginning of this chapter, that this particular coterie of individuals rather than malicious legislation by the administration were responsible for the half-hearted support of New England. We have now only to discuss the crowning conspiracy of the Junto—the Hartford Convention.

⁸² H. Adams' "Life of Albert Gallatin," pp. 437-474.

⁸³ Writings of James Madison, vol. 8, p. 278.

CHAPTER VI

THE HARTFORD CONVENTION

Before attempting to discuss the Hartford Convention, it is necessary to sketch briefly some of the legislation which helped to precipitate it. In our last chapter we left the Administration, perhaps, in the darkest hour of conflict. It was being forced into the most extreme measures to maintain the war. It refused to make peace on humiliating terms, and it seemed next to impossible to prolong the war without more troops. The proposition, by Monroe, to raise a large force by conscription, therefore, brought matters to a crisis in New England. In some of the other states, the matter of local defense had been left almost wholly to the discretion of the respective governors; but the President, becoming suspicious of the loyalty of New England because of the injurious action of the Peace Faction, insisted upon the exclusive control of all military movements there. The Massachusetts militia not having been placed under General Dearborn's orders, the Secretary of State, in an official letter to Governor Strong, refused to pay the expenses of the State militia defending Massachusetts.¹ Similar action for a like cause had occurred in the case of Connecticut, and a clamor was instantly raised that New England was abandoned to the enemy for the action of the National Government. The forces, it is true, had been withdrawn to protect, if possible, the Capital at Washington, but any one has to follow only the conflicts of war to understand why the New England States were thus temporarily unprotected.

The refusal of the Government to pay the militia defending the coast of Massachusetts; the proposition to raise a large force by subscription and the temporary withdrawal of troops, from this section, furnished the Peace Faction new ground upon which they could proceed. A joint committee of the Massachusetts legislature was appointed, having H. G. Otis for its chairman, to make a report on the state of public af-

¹ Niles' Register, vol. 7, p. 148. Monroe's letter to Strong.

fairs. This report² contained a convert threat of independent action on the part of that State, recommending "that a number of troops, not exceeding ten thousand, be raised and officered by the Governor for the defense of the state; that the Governor be authorized to borrow from time to time a sum not exceeding one million dollars to defray local expenses; that . . . persons be appointed as delegates from this legislature to confer with delegates from the States of New England upon subjects of public grievance, and to take measures for procuring a convention of delegates if they think proper; that a circular letter from this legislature be addressed to the executive government of each of said states explaining the objects of the proposed conference and inviting them to concur in sending delegates thereto; that on the day of instant, the legislature will, by joint ballot, elect persons to meet such delegates as may be appointed by the said states, or either of them, at in the state of ."

The Administration minority protested³ against this action, and denounced it as a disguised movement to prepare the way for a dissolution of the Union. The protest was of no avail. The report of the Committee was adopted by a vote of three to one,⁴ and the Governor addressing a circular letter to the other Governors of the New England States, invited them to appoint delegates, to meet in convention at Hartford, Connecticut, December 15, 1814, to deliberate upon the dangers of which the states in the Eastern section of the Union were exposed.⁵ The proposition also contained suggestions relative to Constitutional amendments on the subject of slave representation, which might secure to New England equal advantage with the South.

The convention of both houses of the Massachusetts legislature, October 10, proceeded to the choice of twelve delegates, to meet and confer (on the 15th of December next) with such delegates as may be chosen by any or all of the other New England States.⁶

Late in the same month the legislatures of Connecticut and Rhode Island accepted the invitation from the Governor of

² Niles' Register, vol. 7, p. 150. Report of Committee.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 153.

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 152.

⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 179. The circular letter.

⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 153. Act of Mass. legislature.

Massachusetts, and appointed delegates to the Hartford Convention, Connecticut appointing seven and Rhode Island four.⁷ The legislature of Vermont refused to adopt the Massachusetts resolutions and unanimously reported against them.⁸ New Hampshire was not represented as a state because a majority of the council who must authorize a call of the legislature, to appoint delegates, were Republicans.⁹ This Council consisted of three Republicans and two Federalists, so the Republican majority blocked the appointment of delegates to Hartford. But there followed immediately County Conventions in these two States and Vermont was finally represented by one delegate from the County of Windham, and New Hampshire by two representatives from the counties of Grafton and Cheshire.¹⁰ There were, therefore, only three states fully represented at Hartford.

The Convention met according to programme, on Thursday morning, December 15, 1814, composed of twenty-six delegates.¹¹ They organized by the appointment of George Cabot, of Boston, President and Theodore Dwight of Hartford, Secretary. The sessions of the Convention continued throughout three weeks, behind closed doors. The movement had created much alarm at the Seat of government, especially because at about that time the Massachusetts legislature appropriated a million dollars toward the support of ten thousand men to relieve the militia in service, and to be exclusively under state control.

The Hartford Convention has been condemned and defended alike for almost a century without any one writing a satisfactory account of it. Dwight, Secretary of the Convention, has written a history of it, but it is quite pointless. The treat-

⁷ Niles' Register, vol. 7, p. 165 and 180.

⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 167.

⁹ *Ibid.*, see also Plumer's "Plumer," p. 417.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 305.

¹¹ The following are the names of the delegates: Geo. Cabot, Nathan Dane, Wm. Prescott, H. G. Otis, Timothy Bigelow, Joshua Thomas, Samuel Summer Wilde, Joseph Lyman, Steven Longfellow, Jr., Daniel Waldo, Hodijah Baylies, and George Bliss, from Massachusetts; Chauncey Goodrich, John Treadwell, James Hillhouse, Zephaniah Swift, Nathaniel Smith, Calvin Goddard, and Roger M. Sherman, from Connecticut; Daniel Lyman, Samuel Ward, Edward Monton, and Benjamin Hazard from Rhode Island; Benjamin West, and Mills Olcott from New Hampshire; and Wm. Hall, Jr., from Vermont.

ment of the Convention in Henry Adams "New England Federalism" is equally unsatisfactory. These are the most voluminous accounts available; but, as length seems to be their only redeeming feature, we propose to discard both of them and attempt to build our structure upon fragmentary evidence wherever it can be found available. The reason for nothing of value having been written on the Hartford Convention is the fact that it was conducted in secret and that no one has ever been able to collect any considerable amount of information concerning it. Never, certainly, were doors shut more closely upon a delegate, and (professedly a popular) convention, than upon this one; not even the doorkeepers or messengers gaining access to its discussions.¹² Inviolable secrecy was enjoined upon every member and there is no evidence that the injunction was ever removed.

Four years afterwards, when the Hartford Convention and its projectors bent under the full blast of popular displeasure, Cabot delivered, to his native state, the sealed journal of its proceedings which had remained in his exclusive custody.¹³ When this report was opened it was found to be a meager sketch of formal proceedings.¹⁴ It makes no record of yeas and nays; states none of the amendments offered to the various reports; attaches the name of no one to a single proposition; in short, it carefully suppressed any and all the evidence which could ever be brought against an individual delegate.

For a convention lasting three weeks to leave only a journal of a few pages does not seem reasonable. That twenty-six men should have consented to leave no ampler means of vindicating their own names to posterity seems equally incredible. That sphinx-like mystery, therefore, which has always hung about the Hartford Convention leaves us in grave doubt as to what really took place behind the doors. The writer of today is little better equipped than the writer of a half century ago.

¹² Dwight's "Hartford Convention," p. 385, Resolution 3, which says: "The most inviolable secrecy shall be observed by each member of this convention, including the Secretary, as to all propositions, debates, and proceedings thereof, until this injunction shall be suspended or altered." See also, Winsor's "Nar. and Crit. Hist." vol. 7, p. 321; Randall's "Jefferson," vol. 3, pp. 411-420.

¹³ Winsor's "Nar. and Crit. Hist.," vol. 7, p. 321; Schouler, vol. 3, p. 473.

¹⁴ Niles' Register, vol. 7, p. 405. Journal of the Convention.

Let us begin our discussion with the assumption that what the most earnest projectors wished for, and really intended, that the Convention should accomplish, was left but half done; that the most ardent members of the Junto believed that they had promoted a convention which would assemble and immediately declare the Union severed and that the Northern Confederacy, toward which they had struggled, would suddenly spring into existence.

What we propose to do, then, is to show that some of the members of the Junto intended and actually besought many of the members to declare in favor of separation. On the other hand, the delegates, as they assembled, seem to have had in mind a different method of attack, which was not a bold declaration of secession, but the withholding of all support and the proposing of such amendments to the Constitution as would make the National Government powerless. They would force amendments to the Constitution by withholding all support from the Administration and in such case the Federalists would again get into power. We must depend upon the Journal of the convention for proof of this last proposition.

The idea of a New England Convention was not, by any means, a novel one with the Junto. The plan was in their minds from 1804 until it actually took place. The first mention of such a convention was, as we have seen, in 1808-9.¹⁵ Otis' ideas were exactly the same as those drafted by the Massachusetts committee, of which he was chairman. The second proposal, if we may believe J. Q. Adams and Pickering, was in 1812, immediately after the declaration of war against Great Britain¹⁶ The plan, at this time, was defeated principally by a speech against it in Faneuil Hall, by Samuel Dexter, who formally denounced it as a forerunner to the dissolution of the Union.¹⁷ It remained, therefore, for the third attempt to be successful and that can be said to have been only partially so.

The stout-hearted Pickering still in Congress, spent much of his time and energy writing letters to urge the Convention on to bolder deeds. "Union," he says, October 21, 1814, "is the talisman of the dominant party; and many Federalists, en-

¹⁵ Quincy's "Life of Quincy," p. 164, Otis to Quincy; Adams' "New England Federalism," p. 404, Pickering to J. Lowell; *Ibid.*, Adams to Otis, p. 240.

¹⁶ Adams' "New England Federalism," pp. 404-240-262.

¹⁷ Plumer's "Plumer," p. 404.

chanted by the magic sound, are alarmed at every appearance of opposition to the measures of the faction, lest it should endanger the Union. I have never entertained such fears. On the contrary, in advertng to the ruinous system of our government for many years past, I have said, let the ship run aground. The shock will throw the present pilots overboard, and then competent navigators will get her afloat and conduct her safely into port."¹⁸

Gouverneur Morris seems to have been in some doubt as to what the Convention would do, for we find him writing Pickering, November 1, 1814, as follows: "Doubts are, I find, entertained whether Massachusetts is in earnest, and whether she will be supported by the New England family. But surely these outrageous measures must arouse their patriot sentiment to cast off this horrible load of oppression."¹⁹

As we have seen all through our narrative, half heartedness on the part of some of New England's leaders, and a lack of the entire confidence of the people, had served to hold in check all but the most radical when it came to a striking point. There was never any want of discussion, but, when it came to point of action, Pickering and the most radical of his Junto were disappointed. "I hope in God," he wrote John Lowell, November 7, "that the delegates of Massachusetts (a decided majority, at least) may now prove their readiness to act as well as to speak. I consider the destiny of New England, and, in the result, the United States to be placed in the hands of the proposed convention. While any symptoms of faint-heartedness will ruin all, the wise sentiments and efficient measures the Convention will be able to express and devise, and the dignified firmness with which they shall be enforced, forbidding every suspicion that they will not be verified in *act*, will insure the wished for success. The forlorn and destitute condition of the states south of the Potomac, will render your victory easy and complete."²⁰

These two men were perhaps the most active and violent in trying to prepare the minds of the delegates for action. Lowell was one of the most active, influential and radical, writers in New England. His pen was going all the time and scathing indeed were its productions.²¹ Lowell was certainly in touch

¹⁸ Lodge's "Cabot," p. 535, Pickering to G. Morris.

¹⁹ "New England Federalism," by Adams, p. 403.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 404.

²¹ His "Road to Ruin" is a fair example of this subject.

with the views of the delegates of the Convention. In a letter to Pickering, December 3, 1814, he said: "I am convinced that the Convention will do little; that they will be ridiculed by one party, and loudly censured by the other. I am convinced that it will not go far enough; but they ought not to have accepted the position unless they felt, each for himself, that he was ready for great and decided measures. When you ask any of them what the Convention will do you will find that they expect to talk. I say no man should have accepted such an office, if he expected it to end in argument and remonstrance."²² In the last part of this letter Mr. Lowell gives us some idea of the state of mind in which he found many of the delegates. Cabot, the President, first gets his attention in this wise: "Cabot is undoubtedly a wise man but he has no confidence in the possibility of awakening the people. He will not, therefore, be in favor of any measures which will disturb our sleep. So at least I fear; for I cannot find out from him what his opinions are."

"Otis is naturally timid, and frequently wavering—today bold, tomorrow like a hare trembling at every breeze. He is sincere in wishing thorough measures; but a thousand fears restrain him."

"Bigelow is bold. He sneers at all threats of vengeance from the other states, and if well supported I have no doubt that measures of dignity and relief would be adopted."

"Prescott is a firm man, but extremely prudent, and so modest that he will yield his opinion to others."

"Mr. Dane you know. He is a man of great firmness approaching obstinacy, and, of course, it must be uncertain what course he will take."

"Mr. Wilde is a very able man but I fear his counsels may be influenced by circumstances."

"These are the men who will have the greatest influence in our delegation. It is to be regretted that we have not chosen two or three such persons as Daniel Sargent, Wm. Sullivan and Colonel Thorndike."²³

Ex-Governor Plumer being asked, while the Convention was in session, what in his opinion would be the outcome, gave the

²² Adams' "Federalism," p. 410.

²³ These were men of known radical tendencies and thoroughly converted to Juntism.

following: "You ask what will be the result of the Hartford Convention. I expect no good, but much evil from it. It will embarrass us, aid the enemy, and protect the war. The prime object is to effect a revolution,—a dismemberment of the Union. Some of the members for more than ten years, have considered such a measure necessary. Of this I have conclusive evidence. I think, however, they have too much cunning, mixed with fear, to proceed further, at their first meeting, than to address remonstrances and resolves to the general government. But the spirit they have excited in the minds of the more violent party will not, I fear, be satisfied with mere words, but will, should the war continue, lead to more violent measures."²⁴ This is an excellent summary, in advance, of the proceedings of the Convention. It is by a man who had every opportunity of knowing what he was talking about, having so recently been Governor of New Hampshire. It bears us out in our assumption that the more radical said "separate" while the timid ones said "hesitate," but we will not leave it with this.

Gouverneur Morris has left us many interesting letters upon this subject, all of which compare quite favorably with the most violent ones of the time. He says on December 22, that his eyes are fixed on the Star in the East²⁵ which he believes to be the day-spring of freedom and glory. "The men assembled will, I believe, if not too tame and timid, be hailed hereafter as the patriots and sages of their day and generation."²⁶ This gentleman was evidently confident that the Convention would not fail to do that which was expected of them. Just before it adjourned we hear him saying: "Yankees like to make what they call fair bargains, and will, I guess, easily take up the notion of bargaining with the National Government, which, according to my notion, can make no bargain of practical result which will not amount to a severance of the Union."²⁷

Nor can it be said that these were the only observers that expected and looked for radical measures from the Convention. The newspapers were just as active and their articles just as vituperative at this time and in this connection as ever before. The *Boston Gazette* has the following: "To the cry of dis-

²⁴ Plumer's "Plumer," p. 420. Letter to Jeremiah Mason.

²⁵ Hartford Convention.

²⁶ Sparks "G. Morris," vol. 3, p. 322.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 326.

union, the plain and obvious answer is that the States are already separated; the bond of union was broken by President Madison. The Convention cannot do a more popular act, not only in New England, but throughout the Atlantic States, than to make a peace for the Government as a whole." The *Baltimore Federal Republican* said, November 17, 1814: "On or before the Fourth of July, if James Madison is not out of office, a new form of government will be in operation in the Eastern section of the Union. Instantly after, the contest will be in many states, whether to join the new government or adhere to the old. . . . Mr. Madison cannot complete his term if the war continues."

These letters²⁸ are the only trustworthy sources to show that separation was expected of the convention by the promoters. How many more of the same strain President Cabot may have torn up, one can only conjecture.²⁹ If we keep in mind that the Hartford Convention was as much a product of the conspiracy of 1803-5, as it was of the War of 1812, it will be much easier to satisfy our minds as to the real intent of this convention. By looking carefully at the attitude of the Essex Junto, toward all National Republican legislation, throughout this period it is not difficult to see that the Hartford Convention was the culmination of Juntoism,—the crowning act of the conspiracy.

We now come to the consideration of the journal left us by Mr. Cabot, which contains the greater part of the information that we have of what occurred behind the closed doors at Hartford. And by an analysis of this journal we must support our second thesis, namely that the less radical believed that the administration could be starved and frightened into terms without openly declaring for separation. It was, they believed, at any rate, worth trying.

The views of the most radical first claimed the attention of the convention, and a discussion of the two positions ensued.³⁰

²⁸ Many other letters of the same nature and by many different persons can be found in Adams' "New England Federalism," pp. 398-421; Sparks "Life of G. Morris," vol. 3, pp. 310-321; and Lodge's "Life of Cabot," pp. 529-550.

²⁹ Lodge says in his "Life of Cabot" that he (Cabot) destroyed his correspondence in his last days.

³⁰ A complete copy of the journal is printed in Niles' Register, vol. 7, p. 305. There are also several copies of it in a single bound volume in Harvard library, entitled, "Hartford Convention of 1814." We will refer to the copy in Niles' Register.

"There are those," it says, "who regard the evils which surround them incurable defects of the Constitution. They yield to a persuasion, that no change, at any time, or on any occasion, can aggravate the misery of their country. This opinion may ultimately prove to be correct. But as the evidence on which it rests is not yet conclusive, and as measures adopted upon the assumption of its certainty might be irrevocable, some general considerations are submitted, in the hope of reconciling all to a course of moderation and firmness which may save them from the regret incident to sudden decisions, probably avert the evil, or at least, insure consolation and success in the last resort."⁸¹ This is an excellent statement of the two opinions regarding the situation as the Convention assembled; the more conservative offering an apology to the more radical for not quite agreeing with them, and at the same time, setting forth what they regard to be the wisest policy and duty of the Convention, which is virtually our second thesis.

Following the statement of the two positions, the Convention goes into a discussion of the disgraceful administration. "The fierce passions which have convulsed the Nations of Europe," they said, "have passed the ocean, and finding their way to the bosoms of our citizens, have afforded the administration the means of perverting public opinion, in respect to our foreign relations, so as to acquire its aid in the indulgence of their adherents."⁸² They must be made to feel that the Eastern States cannot be made exclusive victims of a capricious and impassioned policy."⁸³ But, finally, they agree: "If the Union be destined to dissolution, by reason of the multiplied abuses of a bad administration, it should, if possible, be the work of peaceful times. Events may prove that the causes of our calamities are deep and permanent. They may be found to proceed, not merely from the blindness of prejudice, pride of opinion, violence of party spirit, but they may be traced to combinations of individuals, or of States, to monopolize power and office, and to trample upon the rights and interests of the commercial section of the Union. Then separation will be preferable to an alliance."⁸⁴

⁸¹ Niles' Register, vol. 7, p. 306.

⁸² The long nursed cry of French aid and British oppression.

⁸³ Niles' Register, vol. 7, 306.

⁸⁴ *Ibid.*

The journal next leads us into a detailed presentation and discussion of their grievances in connection with the war. We cannot take up the discussion upon these various subjects but must content ourselves with the conclusion, which will afford a key to the discussion.

They declared the war measures³⁵ unconstitutional and absolutely void, which was followed by a bold statement of "State Interposition." We have already noticed the force of this declaration in connection with Louisiana's application for statehood, but we will quote it again as it belongs in this connection, and is the strongest declaration of "State Sovereignty" yet made. "In case," it says, "of deliberate, dangerous and palpable infractions of the Constitution, affecting the *sovereignty of a state*, and liberties of a people; it is not only the right but the duty of such state, to *interpose its authority* for their protection, in a manner best calculated to secure that end. When emergencies occur, which are either beyond the reach of the judicial tribunals, or too pressing to admit of the delay incident to their forms, states, which have *no common empire* must be their own judges, and execute their own decisions. It will thus be proper for the several states to await the ultimate disposal of the obnoxious measures recommended by the administration and use their power according to the character these measures shall finally assume, to protect their sovereignty."³⁶ The whole journal is nothing but a states rights document, but these few lines must serve as an example of the ideas of the convention upon that doctrine.

The next step in their discussion is perhaps the most important of all to our narrative, for it furnishes indisputable evidence to almost all of the positions we have taken in regard to what New England called ruinous legislation, and to the foundations upon which the Junto has labored. The convention furnishes us this valuable evidence by comparing the administration of Washington to that of Jefferson and of Madison.³⁷ The former administration had been nothing but prosperity at home and respect abroad, while the succeeding administrations by a change of policy simply tore down the wise framework of the Washington Administration.

³⁵ Direct taxation; conscription; National control of state militia; refusal to pay State militia; offensive warfare, etc.

³⁶ Niles' Register, vol. 7, p. 308.

³⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 310.

The reasons for the absolute failure of the latter two administrations, as enumerated in the journal of the Hartford Convention, are as follows: "1. A deliberate and extensive system for effecting a combination among certain states so as to secure to popular leaders in one section of the Union the control of public affairs in perpetual succession.

2. The exclusion from office men of unexceptional merit, for want of adherence to the executive creed.

3. The infraction of the judiciary authority and rights, by depriving judges of their offices in violation of the Constitution.

4. The influence of patronage in the distribution of offices, which in these states has been among men the least entitled to such distinction.

5. The admission of new states into the Union, formed at pleasure, in the Western region, has destroyed that balance of power which originally existed between the states, and deeply effected their interests.

6. The easy admission of naturalized foreigners to places of trust in the government.

7. Hostility to Great Britain and partiality to the late government of France.

8. A superficial theory in regard to commerce, accompanied by a real hatred to its interests, and a ruinous perseverance in efforts to render it an instrument of coercion and war."³⁸

Now perhaps we can safely say that the Hartford Convention was simply the crowning act of the Essex Junto whose intrigues began with the Adams Administration. The Convention was not a mere product of the war of 1812, because we recognize in these grievances the very earliest, as well as the latest, grounds for Junto conspiracies. Pick them to pieces and what do we find? The Virginia rule, removal of dissenting spirits, fate of the midnight judges, New England Federalists not getting their share of appointments, territorial expansion and a destruction of the balance of power, Alien Law not rigid enough, hostility to Great Britain, and a deliberate destruction of commerce. In all of these we have heard the complaining and threatening voices of the "Essex Junto," and it seems almost superfluous to add that the Hartford Convention was truly an offspring of Juntoism.

³⁸Niles' Register, vol. 7, p. 310.

Out of the above quoted grievances they proceed to develop the seven famous amendments, which were carefully prepared but destined never to be removed from the journal. We will not quote these amendments because they simply cover the points we have just considered and can be easily found in the above reference to the journal of the Convention. Some of them, however, are very interesting because they are so sweeping. The sixth says, for example: "No person who shall hereafter be naturalized shall hold any office under the authority of the United States." They despair, of course, of ever importing another such mind as Hamilton's or Gallatin's. The seventh declares: "No person shall be elected to the presidency of the United States a second time; nor shall the President be elected from the same state two terms in succession."

With this much accomplished, there seemed nothing more to be added, except a few well chosen recommendations to their respective states. They are in part: "We, your delegates assembled, do hereby recommend that you adopt all such measures as may be thought necessary to protect the citizens of said states from the operation and effects of all acts which have been or may be passed by the Congress of the United States; that a certain proportion of the taxes be collected and placed in the State Treasuries to be used for the support of the militia which shall be under the command of the Governor; that said troops be armed, equipped, disciplined, and held in readiness for service and upon orders from the Governor shall form a conjunction with the militia of any of the other states to repeal any invasion."³⁹

But it was further resolved: "That if these resolutions to the National Government⁴⁰ should be unsuccessful, and peace should not be concluded and the defense of these be further neglected, it will, in the opinion of this Convention, be expedient for the legislatures of the several states to appoint delegates to another convention, to meet at Boston in the State of Massachusetts, on the third Thursday of June next, with such powers and instructions as the exigency of a crisis so momentous may require."

Resolved further, "That the Hon. George Cabot, the Hon.

³⁹ Niles' Register, vol. 7, p. 312.

⁴⁰ The entire report was to be presented to the authorities at Washington.

Chauncey Goodrich and the Hon. Daniel Lyman, or any two of them, be authorized to call another convention at any time before new delegates shall be chosen, if in their judgment the situation of the country demands it." ⁴¹

With these expressions of their feelings and desires the Hartford Convention merely adjourned to meet again if the National Government failed favorably to meet their advances. It was not dissolved as a mass meeting with a full report, but an adjournment to a later day for the purpose of ascertaining what action the Government would take concerning their report. Do they not leave this impression? If our present report is not effective in relieving the situation, we will meet "on the third Thursday of June next" and follow the wishes of the more radical by voting secession. What would have been done, however, can only be a matter of conjecture. We regret that the evidence available does not give some idea of the debate which took place in the Convention. There must have been dissenting voices; there must have been resolutions and amendments; some must have been more radical than others; there must have been heated speeches; but upon these points we must remain ignorant. Mr. Cabot stated over his signature, November 16, 1819, that this was the original and only journal of the proceedings of the Hartford Convention, and we should dislike to be accused of even attempting to impeach the testimony of the President of the Hartford Convention. ⁴²

The apparent timidity of the Convention provoked some very ironic statements from the Junto members who remained at home. This for example: Gouverneur Morris wrote Moss Kent, January 10 "The meekness of their doings reminds me of one of La Fontain's fables. A council of rats being convoked, to devise measures of defense against feline depredations, a sleek young member was much applauded for proposing to tie a bell around puss's neck, which giving seasonable notice of her approach, would enable every one to take care of himself. Before the question was put, an old rat (addressing the chair) said, 'I too, Sir, entirely approve of our young friend's proposal, but wish, before I vote, to know who will tie on the bell.'" ⁴³

⁴¹ Niles' Register, vol. 7, p. 313.

⁴² Dwight's "Hartford Convention," p. 399.

⁴³ Sparks "G. Morris," vol. 3, p. 326.

The legislatures of Massachusetts and Connecticut⁴⁴ accepted the report of their delegates in January, 1815, and appointed a commission to proceed to Washington to make proposed demands upon the National Government. The members of this body from Massachusetts were H. G. Otis, Wm. Sullivan and Thomas Perkins; those from Connecticut, Calvin Goddard and Nathaniel Terry.⁴⁵

While the Hartford Convention was in session deliberating how to create more discontent and strife, there was also a meeting at Ghent whose members were exerting every effort to effect a peace. What a different atmosphere must have enveloped the two Conventions! On December 24, 1814 the peace of Ghent was completed. This being the day before Christmas the natives of Ghent entertained their distinguished guests at a public dinner where the band played "God save the King" and "Hail Columbia." Some days later the Hartford Convention adjourned, amid shouts and hisses from all loyal citizens. Stigmatized for unpatriotic motives and conduct, the twenty-six members of the Convention remained condemned to political infamy.

The tidings from Ghent reached Washington before those from Hartford and the news of the peace of Ghent and the victory of New Orleans successively sped over the land. Here was a sudden turn of affairs! The "Northern Confederacy" bubble burst and the "Essex Junto" and its cohorts dwindled into a handful of malcontents, who could be easily put down by the people of their own states. Derision succeeded indignation in the public mind. Henry Wheaton advertised a reward in his paper (*The New York National Advocate*) for the discovery of some unfortunate gentlemen who had started for Washington in the service of the Hartford Convention, but who had missed their way, and it was feared had drowned themselves.

The committee from Hartford neither displayed their credentials to the President nor delivered their ultimatum to the Government, but took an early opportunity to quietly return home. The Hartford Convention remains famous in American History only as a powerful solvent in National politics.

The War of 1812 marks the end of the "Essex Junto" and

⁴⁴ Niles' Register, vol. 7, pp. 372-373.

⁴⁵ Randall's "Jefferson," vol. 3, p. 415.

also the Federalist party. The party could not survive the factious opposition to the war. It could not stand the opprobrium of the Hartford Convention. Many of the Federalist leaders had given their support to that most unpopular gathering, while many others, as we have seen, felt that the Hartford assembly should have adopted even more effectual measures of opposition. The party could not remove the public conviction that its little conclave of leaders had been secretly plotting treason and disunion. Only thirty-four Federalist electors voted for Rufus King for President in 1816. It held only Massachusetts, Connecticut and Delaware, with three Maryland electors who would not vote. The scattered Federalists in Congress did not act as a party, having no issue even as a pretense, and, as a National party, it ceased to exist. State-wise, it controlled Connecticut till after 1820, and Massachusetts till 1823, when the Republicans swept even Essex County from the "Junto." It lingered also in Maryland, Delaware, and North Carolina for some time. These were the last surviving remnants of the party of Washington and Hamilton, and the votes were the party's last expiring act.

The country now enters into the "Administration of Peace" having realized, with the exception of a few dissenting voices, that, "We are all Federalists, we are all Republicans."

BIBLIOGRAPHY

A. The Primary Sources consist of letters (public and private), documents written by the Junto members themselves or by others who had fallen under their influence. In this class we must include a great many books valuable only for a few printed letters.

1. The "Pickering Manuscripts," consisting of about twenty-three volumes and including Pickering's whole correspondence during this period. These papers are in the Boston Historical Society, Boston, Mass., and are indexed and ready for publication. They have been searched by a number of writers wishing to defend their friends and for this reason almost all of the letters of importance to our monograph have been published in one place or another.

2. Henry Adams, "Documents relating to New England Federalism," in a single volume 1800-1815. This work was prepared largely in defense of the position taken by J. Q. Adams in connection with the Junto. It contains a very large number of letters together with the entire controversy between J. Q. Adams and the New England Federalists of 1828.

3. H. C. Lodge's "Life and Letters of Geo. Cabot," contains a large number of valuable letters covering the same period and printed to vindicate Cabot in his connection with the Junto. These two volumes contain almost all of the important letters in the Pickering Papers from 1803 to 1809.

4. Theophilus Parsons, "Memoirs of Chief Justice Parsons," has the earliest and most valuable account of the Essex Junto." It is valuable only in our introduction as giving documents showing the origin of the name. It has an excellent appendix in which is printed the "Essex Result" which has been referred to as being the basis for the term "Essex Junto."

5. "The Works of Alexander Hamilton," by John C. Hamilton, vols. 6 and 7, furnish much of the correspondence between Hamilton and the Junto members in John Adams' Cabinet, and in vol. 7, is printed Hamilton's "Public Denunciation of John Adams."

As important in this connection, see the "Works of John Adams," by Chas. F. Adams, vol. 9, and the "Memoirs of the Administrations of Washington and John Adams," by Geo. Gibbs, vol. 2. These two volumes throw considerable light

upon the controversy between Adams and the J unto regarding the X. Y. Z. affair.

6. "History of the Republic of the United States," by John C. Hamilton, vols. 5 and 7. Volume 7 is a very important source especially in connection with the Burr conspiracy of 1800-1801. Many of the letters addressed to Alexander Hamilton are printed in this volume. Volume 5 is important only in regard to the Jay appointment to the court of Great Britain by Washington.

7. "The Life of Wm. Plumer," by his son, in a single volume, has a number of letters and quotations from Plumer's diary of great value to this work.

8. "Life of Thomas Jefferson," by Henry S. Randall, vols. 2 and 3. Volume 3 is of the most importance having an appendix of very great value. In this appendix there are copious quotations from Plumer's diary besides other documents. Both of these volumes have valuable footnotes.

9. "The Life and Writings of Gouverneur Morris," by Jared Sparks, vol. 3; "The Life and Correspondence of Rufus King," by C. R. King, vol. 5, 1807-1816; "The Life of Josiah Quincy," by Edmund Quincy, in a single volume; "The Life of Albert Gallatin," by Henry Adams, in a single volume; and "The Life and Works of Fisher Ames," vol. 1, by Seth Ames, all have a few documents of value. "The Lives of King and Morris are of most importance.

10. "The American State Papers, For. Rel.," vol. 3," we have all the documents concerning the Henry Mission, and much of the correspondence between England and America prior to the War of 1812.

11. "Niles' Register," vols. 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, and 35, is our most valuable source in furnishing State documents. It has supplied much of the information regarding the action and attitude of New England during the War of 1812, and the Hartford Convention. Volume 2, contains the documents connected with the Henry Mission agreeing with those in the Am. State Papers, vol. 3. Volume 7, is of vital importance and contains a copy of the journal of the Hartford Convention.

12. "Annals of Congress," Nos. 13, 22, 23, and 24, covering the years 1803-1804, and 1810-1812 furnish testimony as to the position taken by members of the J unto on such questions as, "The Louisiana Purchase," the admission of Louisiana to Statehood, and No. 23, part one, 12th, Cong. has the House investigation and report on the Henry Papers. Volume 1, No. 25, not included above, contains the House debate on the "Blue Lights" affair.

To the above sources we would add the following, all of which are in the Harvard Library, Cambridge, Mass., "The

Crisis, or Origin of our Political Dissensions," a single pamphlet, by a Vermont Citizen.

"Pickering's Public Letter to Governor Sullivan and Remarks," in a single pamphlet, 1808.

"Memoirs of Aaron Burr," by M. L. Davis, 2 vols., containing some important letters.

"A View of the Political Conduct of Aaron Burr, Esq., Vice President," by John Wood. Perhaps as good a view of Burr's conduct as can be found.

The Examiner, containing political essays and official documents. Edited by Barent Gardiner. It includes the fifteen articles entitled, "Road to Ruin," by John Lowell.

"Hartford Convention," a single bound volume containing several copies of the journal of the Convention.

"Political Tracts on the War of 1812," several volumes, including many speeches and addresses characteristic of the time and of the Junto.

"Political Tracts of 1812-1815."

"Political Pamphlets, 1800-1812." These political pamphlets and tracts are valuable as giving local coloring and views of the extremists.

"Political Tracts 1805-1812." In this volume one can find the decision of the several Justices of the Supreme Court of Massachusetts upon the questions submitted by Governor Strong regarding the management of State Militia.

"Diary of Dr. Nathaniel Ames," vol. 8-12, in the Mass. Hist. Society, Boston, Mass. Dr. Ames was a Republican in sympathy and a brother of Fisher Ames a Junto member. He makes most biting remarks upon Juntoism.

B. The Secondary Sources are of little importance to this subject. All that are of any value will be given in the following order:

1. Newspapers.
2. General Histories of the United States.
3. Histories on Special Topics.
4. Miscellaneous.

I. NEWSPAPERS

The papers which will be mentioned cover pretty fairly the period from 1800 to 1814. The files are not complete in the case of some of them, nor do they all run through the entire period, but those given below are sufficient to give us the local attitude. Files of all the following papers can be found in the Harvard Library and in The Mass. Hist. Society.

1. *Boston Gazette*, 1800-1814.
2. *The Boston Centinel*, 1800-1814.

3. *The Democrat, Boston*, 1808.
4. *The Statesman, Boston*, 1808.
5. *The Connecticut Courant, Hartford*, 1800-1801.
6. *The New York Gazette*, New York, 1800-1801.
7. *The Columbian Detector*, Boston, 1808.
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9. *The Essex Register*, Salem, Mass. 1808.
10. *The Pittsfield Sun*, Pittsfield, Mass.
11. *The Eastern Argus*, Portland, Mass. 1804.
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13. *The American Mercury*, New York, 1803.
14. *The Morning Chronicle*, New York, 1804.

I have given the year of the particular paper as quoted from. It is not necessary to criticise them individually because they are all very much alike and simply voice the sentiments of the Junto, in regard to our subject.

2. HISTORIES OF THE UNITED STATES

1. Schoulers "History of the United States," vols. 2 and 3, is the most valuable general history touching the Essex Junto." The references and statements in this history are accurate and helpful.

2. Von Holst's "Constitutional History of the United States," vol. 1, has some valuable notes and references, otherwise it is practically of no importance to our narrative.

3. Hildreth's "History of the United States," vol. 3; McMaster's, "History of the people of the United States," vol. 1; and Henry Adams, "History of the United States," vol. 5 and 6, treat very sparsely the Junto movement and are of little practical value. Pitkin, Bartlett, Spencer, Bryant and Gay, Hart's American Nation Series, etc., merely mention the Essex Junto."

3. HISTORIES ON SPECIAL SUBJECTS

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2. Samuel Perkins, "History of the Political and Military Events of the Late War," in a single volume, gives an excellent review of our grievances with Great Britain at the opening of hostilities, and the attitude with which the Federal Peace men met the declaration of war.

3. J. G. Palfrey's "History of New England," vol. 2, has only a few suggestions for us at the beginning of our work. I have been unable to find any history of New England, or of any one of the New England States, of any value in treating this subject.

4. J. D. Hammond's "History of Political Parties in the

State of New York," vol. 1, is only valuable as giving results of local elections, etc.

5. E. P. Powell's "Nullification and Secession in the United States," in a single volume, has a chapter on the "Northern Confederacy Plot 1803-1804." It is of little value in either treating or studying this particular phase because he does not refer to a single source. His chapter is fairly accurate, however, if one cares only for its face value. It has not been used in this work to any speakable extent, only one or two references.

6. Theodore Dwight's "History of the Hartford Convention; with a Review of the Policy of the United States Government which led to the War of 1812," in a single volume, has rather successfully defeated its purpose; that is to say a defense of the members of the Hartford Convention, based entirely upon Junto grievances will scarcely satisfy us that their conduct was honorable. The journal is the only help it contains.

4. MISCELLANEOUS

1. *The American Hist. Rev.*, vol. 1, October 1895 to July 1896, has an article entitled: "The First National Nominating Convention." It treats the secret convention of 1812, as the first convention of the Federalists, and is the only available treatment of the subject. It is *critical* and has a number of valuable references. By J. S. Murdock.

2. *The American Hist. Rev.*, of July 1912, has a similar article by S. E. Morrison, entitled: "The first National Nominating Convention, 1808." This man has a better claim to his position and proves that Mr. J. S. Murdock was exactly four years out of date. This article is of much greater value than the one above for the same reasons.

3. "Perpetual War, The Policy of Mr. Madison," by a New England farmer. This pamphlet being an examination of his late message to Congress as far as respects the following topics: Conscript militia, pretended negotiations for peace, etc."

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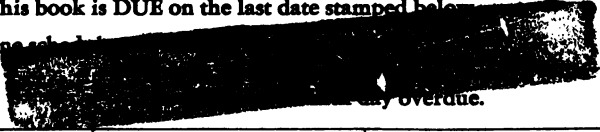
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